MÜVMAG

~~PARKOUR CULTURE~~

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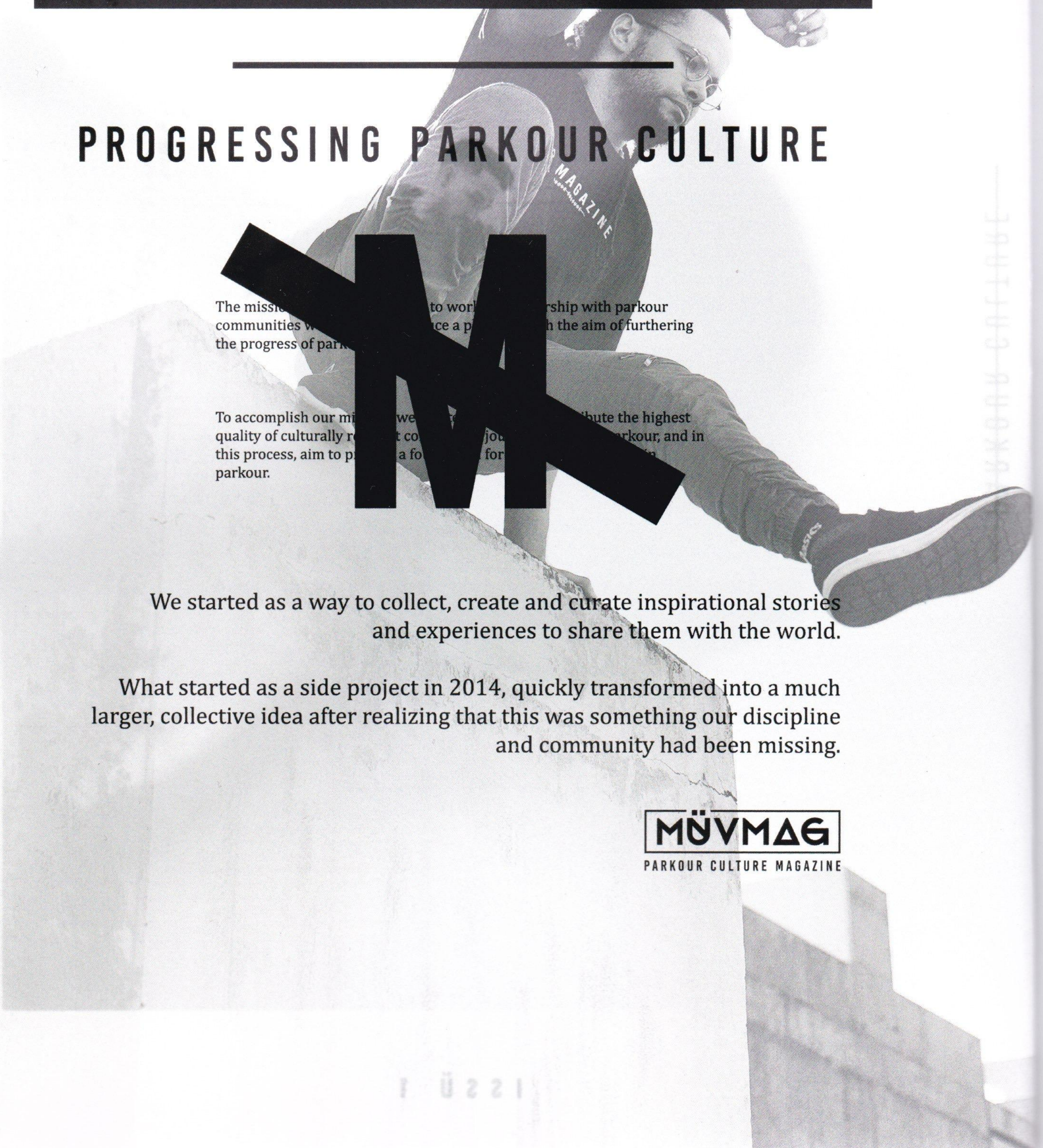

COLLECT + CREATE

PROGRESSING PARKOUR CULTURE

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We started as a way to collect, create and curate inspirational stories and experiences to share them with the world.

What started as a side project in 2014, quickly transformed into a much larger, collective idea after realizing that this was something our discipline and community had been missing.

MÜVMAG
PARKOUR CULTURE MAGAZINE

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MUVMAG.COM

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FROM THE TEAM

I started MÜVMAG as a way to collect, create and curate inspirational stories and experiences to share them with the world. It was born out of the desire for a publication that embodied the culture of parkour and not solely the training.

What started as a side project in 2014 from my apartment, quickly transformed into a much larger, collective idea after realizing that this was something our discipline and community had been missing.

Today, we have moved from a digital publication to print. Today, we are no longer just a magazine, but an entire platform dedicated to the growth of parkour culture. This print magazine marks the first big step forward within our ever-expanding vision.

As much as I have always entertained the idea of this project and spent uncountable hours to make it a reality, it wouldn't be here without those who truly believed in the idea - those who also dedicated their time and effort to make this possible.

My original partner, Milo, was the first to help me believe in the possibilities that were present. He knew that the idea was bigger than us and could help be a leading force in our cultural development. However, due to the amount of work it took to create a project of the caliber we aimed for, we became burnt out.

It wasn't until my closest friend, Thamara Monroy, told me something unexpected. As much as we loved each other, she wasn't the type to romantically support for the sake of support, and this wasn't just with me but with everyone. While she just wasn't that kind of person, there was always the space for constructive criticism. But one day, her words struck me harder than anything ever could, lifted me up when I had fallen, and became my driving force of inspiration for the project. "Andrew, I don't usually say things like this, but I believe MÜVMAG will be one of the biggest things to ever happen to parkour." I believed her words then and still believe that today that this platform has the ability to not only shape and define our culture but to help change the world. Regardless of the work that I have done, this platform wouldn't exist without you. For that alone, you'll always have my love and gratitude.

And for those reading this, we thank you. Without your eyes, ears, voices, and minds, we would have no purpose. We've got a long way to go, and there are still many hurdles ahead; many things to fix and others to build. But regardless of where we are now, we thank you for moving forward with us.

ANDREW OBENREDER | FOUNDER OF MÜV MAGAZINE

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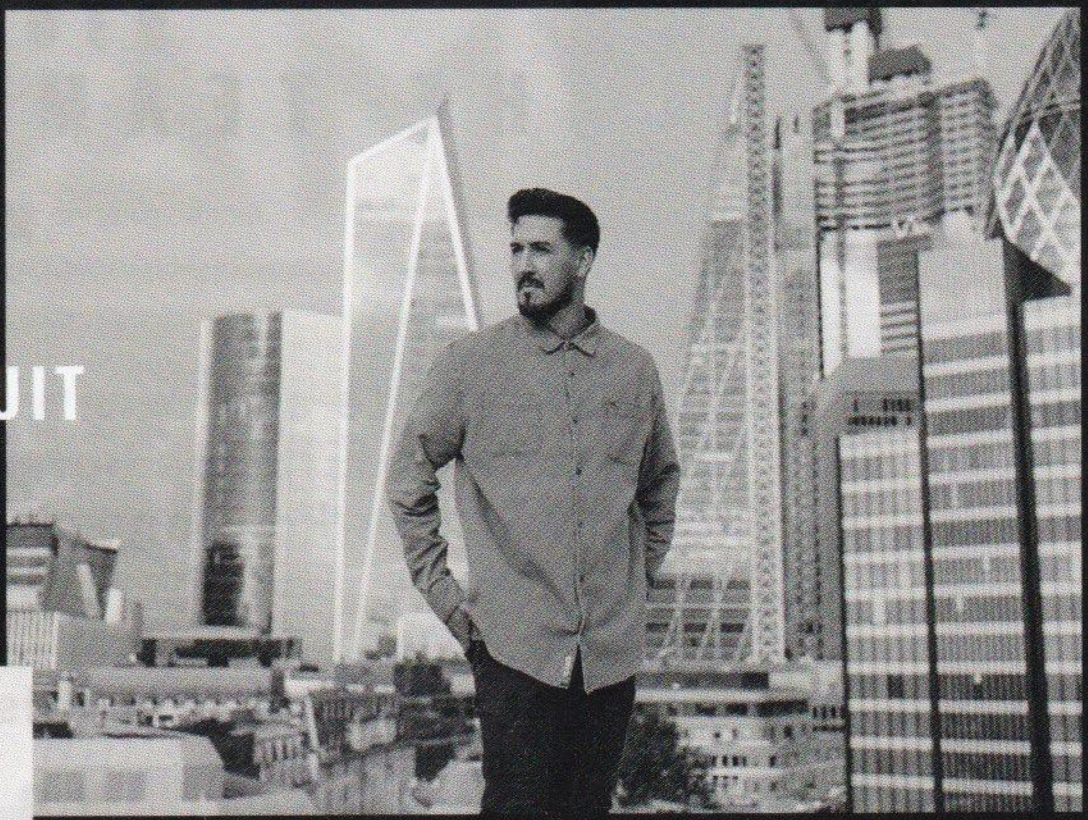

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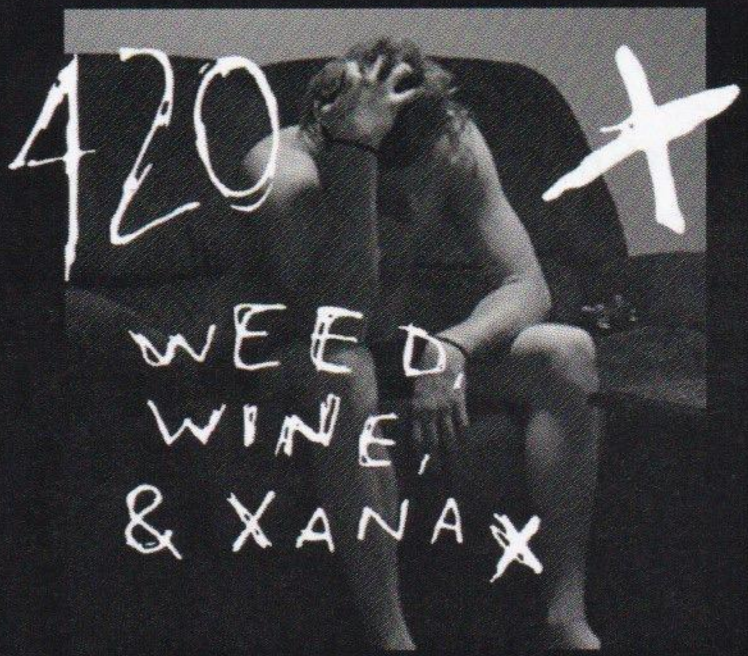
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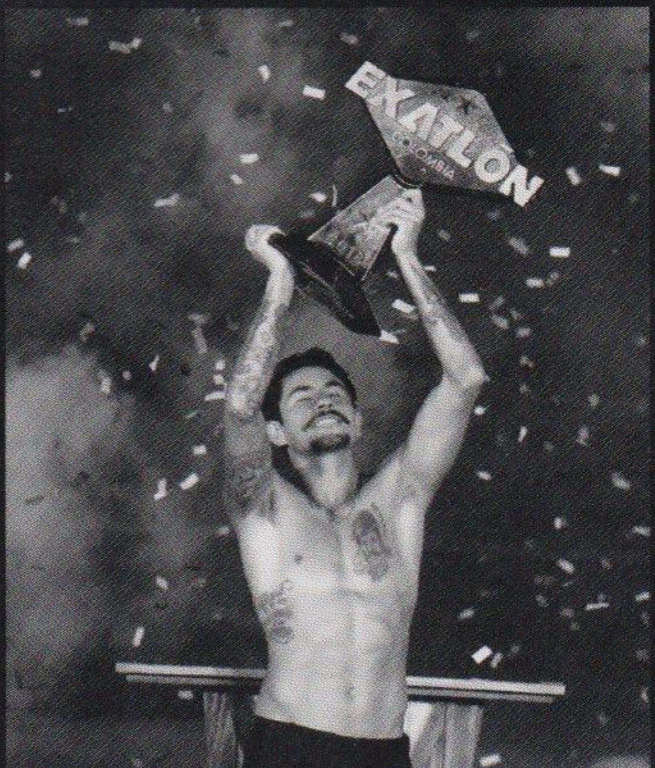

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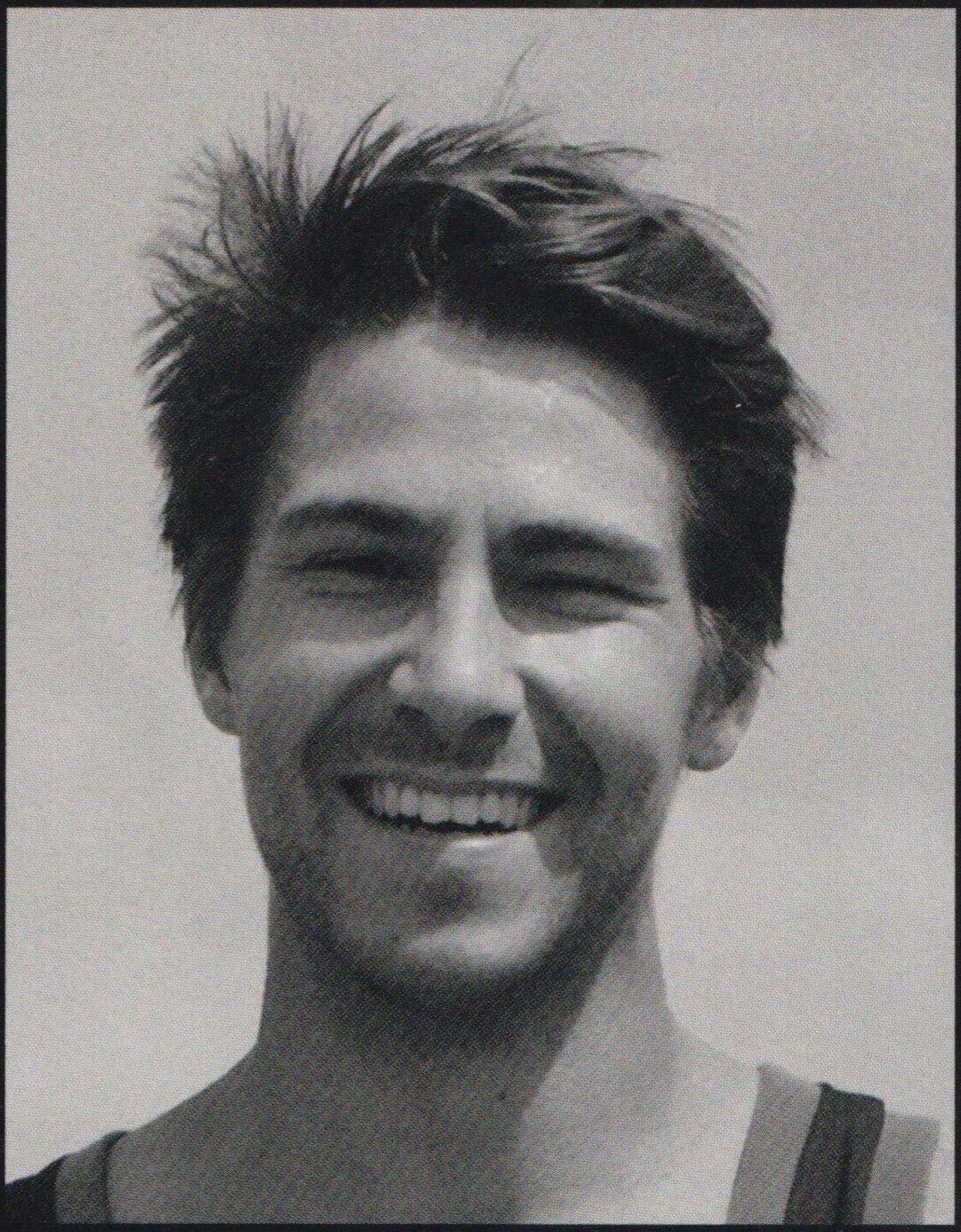

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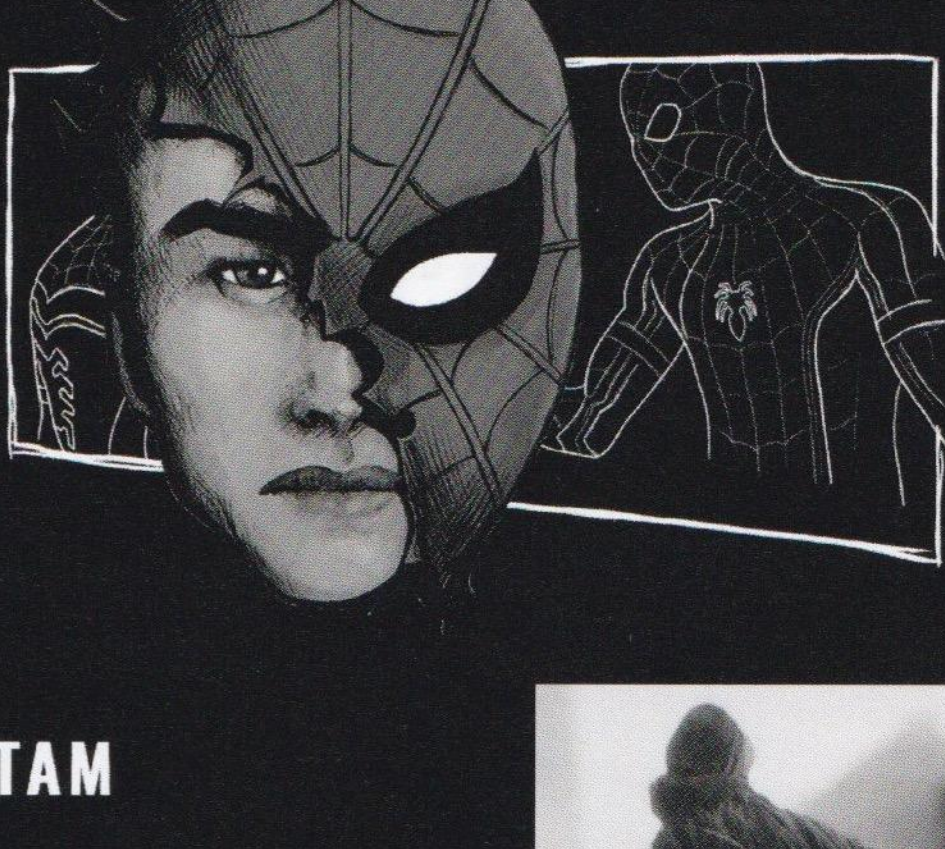

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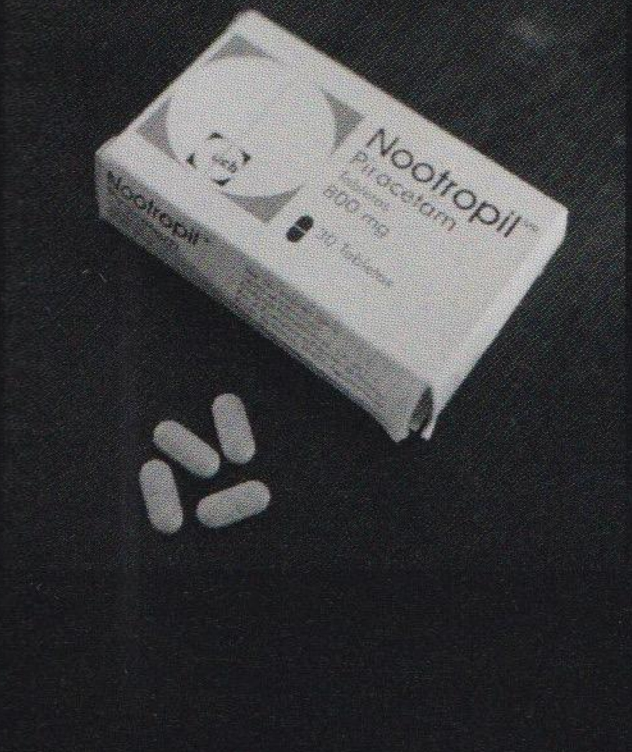
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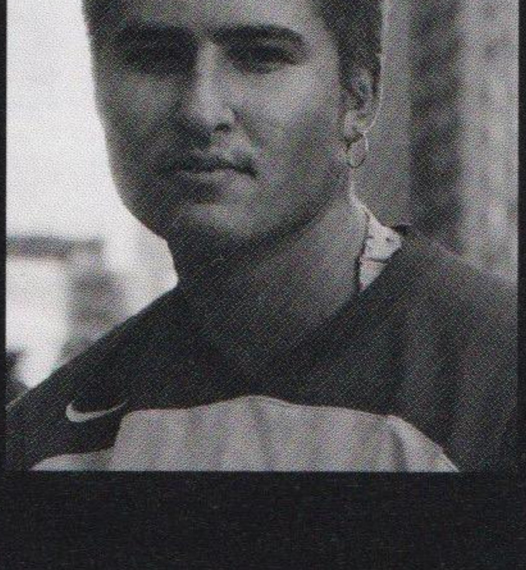

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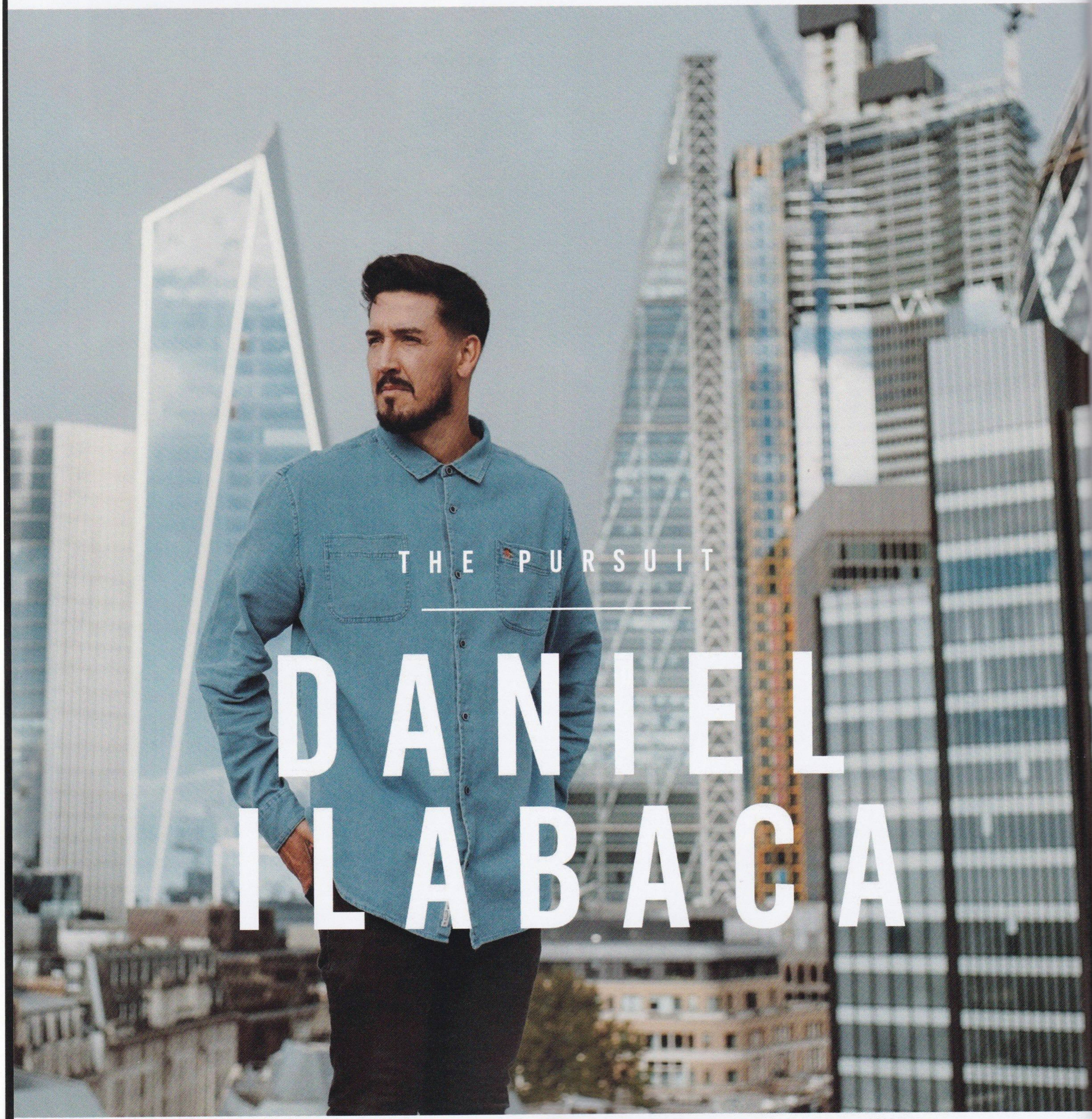

THE PURSUIT

DANIEL ILABACA

FOLLOW – @ESTY.TOMAS @DANIELILABACA @ANDREWMUVS

It's been awhile, man! How's it going?

It has! It's been four years.

(Laughs) That's wild bro!

Right?! Life is good, man! I'm still living in Mexico, which I can't complain about.

Ah, that's crazy man!

I moved down about a year after you and I were here and I've been here since, other than going back to Pittsburgh for a year for surgery on the ankle. Have just been working on the magazine, skating, parkour, tattooing, a little bit of everything.

Sick bro! There's quite a big skate community in Mexico, isn't there?

Oh, there is a nice skate community in Mexico.

I see a lot from them. I only follow a few channels, but I see a lot through the rollerblade channel, and there seems to be a good bunch of people that get together now and again.

Yeah, the aggressive community seems to be the largest skate community here, and I've bladed with maybe 15-20 people so far.

That's awesome, bro! That's sick! Aggressive seems to be making quite a comeback, isn't it? I mean, just in general, there are obviously people who have stuck out for the long haul, but at the same time, it seems like it's up and coming again, which is quite exciting. Especially for those who have been out of the scene for some years.

Yeah, it is! I started aggressive skating when I was about seven and quit when I was about 16, I think, and just picked it up again two years ago or so.

It's been roughly the same for me, man.

I didn't know that! I didn't know that you skated when you were younger as well, that's sick!

Yeah, I had two older brothers that did it. I was about seven, I'd say, and I did it until I was like 14, and again as of two years ago – started getting back into it again, so.

So what really go you into rollerblading in the first place?

I've got two older brothers, man, and they used to skate a whole bunch. We had the biggest skatepark in Europe apparently at one point, and it wasn't far from where we lived, so my brothers found out about that place and started going constantly. Back in the days of VHS, they'd buy videos from the skatepark, and yeah man, I got into it through them, basically. Whatever my older brothers wanted to do, that was what I wanted to do. But I guess I stopped because they moved into secondary school, and I think girls became a thing and it just died off! (Laughs) Even though I was doing really, really well. Like I was entering into comps and stuff. This was way before I was doing, I mean, I was always doing parkour, but this was way before I knew what parkour was, kind of thing. But as soon as they stopped, I just lost interest because the only reason I did it was because they did it.

So what brought you back to it?

Claudiu, the guy who does a lot of the Storm videos and produces a lot of awesome footage, he got asked to do a commercial, and he wasn't available, so he put me forward for it, knowing that I was a blader as well and also used to play ice hockey back in the day. So I ended up getting flown out to Kiev, Ukraine, to be a camera operator on an ice hockey commercial, and as soon as I put my feet on the ice with the power skates that I had, I just fell in love with it, man. And it just rekindled a flame in my heart and a passion for getting back into that world, really, so these past two years have just been having my eyes opened. Not only a rediscovery, but a new take on something in relation to the way that I view movement that I didn't have before. So it's just been really, really exciting to see how it turns out.

Speaking of where things are now, I saw the production you did through *Rollerblade* with Danny Aldridge, and it was an interesting mix of movement. I very much enjoyed the process of you guys playing back and forth.

After the commercial that I worked on, I wanted to get a pair of blades, and even though I used to do aggressive, it was more from the angle of just wanting to go fast. So I did a bit of research online and stuff. It's funny the way Instagram works, it's like it only shows you what you're interested in, so the moment I showed interest in blading again, all these things were being flooded into my consciousness. It was just sick to see that there was still a community, still a lot of people moving. Just the aggressive side of it, even though I loved it back in the days, I really just wanted to go fast and use it to commute through the city. So I started looking at speed skating, and that's when I came across Danny.

So I looked at Danny's stuff through Rollerblade and thought that this is what I wanted to do. I had already bought a pair of Twister Edge 80's, but Rollerblade just brought out their newer version the Twister Edge X. They were so sick that I messaged them and was like, "Hey guys! Those rollerblades look like a piece of a Harrier jet, like a chunk just fell off the plane itself," and I guess they were just so stoked by the comment, and probably having a following helps too, but they just offered to send me a pair, which I was psyched by actually. I tried to reach out to other companies and stuff, but I didn't really get any luck with that, so it was amazing just to see how open they were to the idea, as I didn't really have anything. They were just super pumped and down to collaborate and through back and forth conversations, somehow I just ended up getting into a conversation with Danny. We kind of fired back a few messages now and again on Instagram, and things just kind of lined up, man. One day we were in a conversation and just came to the conclusion that it was time. So he invited me out to Barcelona to go shoot a video with them, and it lined up pretty nicely, which is why I feel it all came together because me and my lady were going on holidays for three weeks to Barcelona. So I mentioned to Danny that I was going out to Barcelona, knowing that is where he was living, and he fancied meeting up and kind of hanging out or whatever it be. So we met up, kind of just hung out - me, him, and Greg for the evening - we went out for a meal, and he was just like, "Let's shoot some stuff while you're here." So we set aside three days for shooting, which only boiled down to one day because the other two days were raining. Like the whole two weeks I was in Barcelona it was just raining constantly. But yeah, we just went out, kind of as a feeler, and we ended up coming away with the video we shot together which again, kind of blew me away really, because I didn't expect we'd get anything with the minimal window that we had.

It's quite impressive that you guys walked away with what you did seeing as you really only had one shoot day.

Yeah, so it was sick, man! It's interesting because I remember I left the blade world when it was kind of like, you know, a lot of what was seen in the beginning of parkour. What I experienced in the beginning of parkour was like the remnants of what I experienced in the blade community; the mentality of this is how it is done, this is the steez, this isn't cool, this is cool. And so, it was funny going into parkour having that foundation of blading - to see parkour be a world that was like a recreation of something I had experienced in the past. So it was really easy for me to not be associated with that whole thing, but at the same time, just be involved with what was going on. So coming back into blading, my question was like, I'm aware that in the past it was like this, but I just see this guy, Danny, who's like just a dude who likes to skate, man, just loves to go fast, and I dig that. So I was really curious as to how it was going to turn out, and honestly dude, the shoot was really chill, Greg was an awesome guy, they were super pumped for collaborating, they are still pumped to collaborate again. Rollerblade was super open and flexible about just collaborating with a parkour dude. Yeah, it was amazing, man! There is just this real appreciation for one another's activities, but there is this also on-the-line kind of feeling that the generation from when I came up blading that sort of died off. For me, the generation that came through next, being the parkour guys, were in my opinion always meant to be the new blading generation. So, I think that's the spin on it really, I think I'm kind of on a journey where I'm just really enjoying blading and parkour again.

The key is to find the things that stimulate you, and sometimes they transform into other activities, and it's just to have an open mind enough to go where that feeling is, do you know what I mean?

Yes, absolutely!

But at the same time, not only am I enjoying it as a rediscovery, but it's also quite cool to think that it might spark a new wave of bladers throughout the parkour community. Which would be amazing, but at the same time, I got a message from someone that said something like, "Ah, you do bladekour," and my response to that was that for me this isn't a new activity. I really want to make it clear that these are two different activities and they always will be, and there should be excitement that there is a transition between the two activities. It's the ability to cross into two worlds and have two worlds live together rather than saying it's a new activity – it's parkour blading.

It's this romantic relationship between two different disciplines, that while inherently different, share certain elements. Parkour and blading share similar movement patterns, you have attributes like speed, power, and balance and all those things that transition back and forth. But even with all the similarities, they're still very different practices, and why try making it something new when it isn't?

Yeah, it's exactly that, man. Like, I learned to flip off blades before I learned to flip off of my feet, so it definitely helped me transition into parkour. At the same time, it's like, there aren't many activities in the world, or at least within the sphere of things that I'm interested in, where there is an appreciation and acceptance for both activities rather than "we don't do this" and "we don't do that." But actually, either one or two of the activities complement one another and are just an extension of the individuals' experience of the way that they move through the world. In my opinion, it would be sick to see blading as a necessity within the parkour world as a way of getting to and from spaces that we train at. Like, instead of getting into the subway, why not just hold onto the back of a bus through London and go to the next spot, and when you get there you put your shoes back on and train a bit, you know what I mean? I just love the idea of both worlds complimenting one another.

I agree. Actually, I was just re-watching an old video with Mathieu Ledoux where he was talking about the reasons why he began mixing the ideas of parkour and blading and how he developed a relationship with the two. People kept asking him if it was a mix of parkour, and his answer was no. Why do people constantly try to fit ideas into a box? For him, the thing he was doing was skating, and while he also did parkour, just because he used elements of another interchangeably, why did it have to be something different? Why was the label so important? Why couldn't it just be what it was without someone forcing it into some new space with a new name?

I guess, it's understandable to some degree, isn't it? We all have the tendency to try and define something so that we can grasp it and it's something we can conceptualize. I guess though, that it's just an echo of a voice that resonates deep within to say that it's just good to have an appreciation for the things that are and to have an open mind to experience them. Do you know what I mean? And so, I do get the side from someone saying that this is a new activity, I can see where it comes from, but for me, I honestly just express that I have no interest for creating something new, but appreciating the things that already exist.

So speaking of creating, I've seen not only have you been creating things through inline but also in a production sense, operating cameras utilizing inline as well. Can you tell me about what you've been doing with Stunt Camera Crew?

A lot of my work tends to be media related, so whenever I've had various companies approach me for multiple jobs, I've always gone to one person: Will Sutton. He went from being a parkour guy and transitioned to pursuing the film aspect of things things, enough so to buy a RED camera and other expensive gear, so he really made it his lifestyle. I've been longtime friends with Will, and whenever I got any sort of brand-related work, I would get him in on the job and vice versa. On one occasion we collaborated with FeiyuTech, and really just being together that week, we talked a lot about this potential of being athletes and filming athletes and being able to do it in such a way that other camera operators can't do. Having worked with big directors on commercials myself, and I've ended up directing and suggesting the angles myself because of my familiarity. And it's probably the same with a lot of people who film parkour, like having this sense and awareness of knowing where to position yourself to get the best angle of the movement for the take, unlike people in the film world. But we just thought about the idea of starting something up that would be able to show our abilities in producing stuff with little to no money that would usually require big budgets on film sets. Like I remember working on a commercial last year where they were merely just doing a tracking shot where they were pulling back from an actress in front of the camera, and they used a massive crane arm for it. And I thought to myself, if there were just a pair of blades and they had a MOVI Pro setup or whatever, they could probably just pull back, and that would be the shot.

We waited for the next job to come in, and I don't know if it was the Original Penguin thing that I did or if FeiyuTech was the excuse for us to say why not just try it and take the idea and see if we could produce some stuff, really. For me, the angle on it was that not only the topic of discussion for general chit chat with Will, but for me it was just appealing from the idea of taking the thing that I just recently got interested in again, being blading, and treating it like an extension of that challenge. Like, can I do it with a RED in my hand? So it kind of came from there really.

Stunt Camera Crew was something that we thought of really quickly. Will started a channel, literally only put a few posts up, and within a few days it already pulled in so much attention that there were film channels on Instagram that loved the format, loved the style of the work, and the way it was showing BTS and the footage itself, and we realized there was something there to explore further. So I think for both of us it's just an experiment, really. Will works as a camera operator, I have various jobs, and I'm good at putting pictures together and creating ideas, so we just thought, why not? It's just sheer passion basically, and the idea of wanting to go out to create stuff. I think that the creative process is the main thing for those who are in film or just want to create art. Again, roller coaster ride. I'm enjoying that right now, it's a fun thing. I wouldn't really say it's where my heart lies in relation to the future that I really want to pursue, but I'm loving the creative aspect of it, the challenge, and it seems to be getting a lot of attention. We've had a variety of work that's come through it, and there is a lot of stuff in the pipelines, which is stuff that seems pretty exciting.

So you mentioned it not being the direction that you want to go, but it seems like you've got a lot going on and I feel you there. I'm skating again, there's parkour, I'm working as a photographer and filmmaker, I picked up tattooing a few years back, I'm making music, and there's the magazine. So every day something different is happening, but at the end of the day, I have a feeling for where I want to be, but I'm not entirely certain which direction it'll take me. I don't feel that there is a specific path that will take me there as much as the experience itself will. So, if the production direction isn't where you want to go, where do you see yourself?

I'm still driven by community. Again, I think there is a greater life experience that can be had when you're in pursuit of doing life with people who are like-minded but also have a drive outside of themselves. That makes them people that are about the whole, rather than want to satisfy their own desires. I found myself in that space quite a number of times over the past seven or eight years, I would say. When you're in that space, there is just nothing that compares to it really. I'm hungry for that. Right now I might be dabbling and doing random stuff here and there, but my heart is completely driven by doing life with other people, knowing that we were designed to be a community. That's kind of what it is, but it's a hard thing to put into words.

And I feel that it's hard to grasp onto that feeling sometimes.

It's lofty, isn't it? But it's also tangible. You've hit the nail on the head, it's a feeling, but there have also been tangible moments in my life that I've been able to say that's because of the pursuit of a thing that I can't make sense of or put into words. But because I've aligned myself and entertained the idea of giving space for it, this which I'm currently experiencing right now is a result what I leaped into when I couldn't see it. I would definitely describe myself as an individual who is constantly seeking out where the wave is going to take place. I would describe my life like surfing, although I've only ever done it once...Obviously the experience of surfing must be that there is a contentment with being on the wave and in the stillness of the water, and I find that those who ride the wave out to the very end come crashing into the shore, and have to try very hard just to get back out to catch the next wave. But at that point, you've already missed three or four. I just feel like life is learning how to surf properly and learning where to position yourself in order to catch the right surf. I've always just had this awareness that I can occupy my life and can lead myself into things, or pursue various things, but do those things set me up for that experience? Do those things set me up to experience the new? Do those things set me up to see things that I've never seen before? And to keep me on the verge of being reminded that there is still a lot to life that I haven't seen or experienced yet. I think one of the dangers is becoming presumptuous to what life holds. Getting to this state where you've seen the external world for so long that you give up on the reality of if there is anything else, know what I mean?

I love that you mentioned that because it's one of the most important things for me and something that I always have to pull myself back to. As many life experiences as I've had, as much of the world as I have seen, as many people as I've talked with, and through all the things that I've tried, I still have to be mindful of the fact that I am a student. I believe that the second you feel that you've experienced everything and that you know everything, you have nothing else at that point, and as an individual, what are you here for? You know, I have this very innate desire to bring people together. This was something that you and I played with at the workshop on the scaffolding set in Mexico when we were having people learn to move and play together as a unit rather than individuals. I'm obsessed with the human connection, love, and what those things can bring to this experience. I feel like you can only continue facilitating that ideology if you have the mindset that you are a student. Every time I feel that I've obtained some sort of knowledge that makes me feel like I'm excelling as an individual, I begin to lose sight of the greater picture.

But, while I would love to hear your thoughts on this and I have a feeling it'll re-surface in this conversation, we could literally be on this subject forever, and we have before. So taking it back to the idea of dabbling between that space, what else have you been up to?

Not too much to be fair, bro. Doing a bit of hacky sack right now. I've literally got a hacky sack resting on my foot as we speak. (Laughs) I've been playing hacky this whole time we've been talking.

(Laughs) Impressive.

Nah, I'm just joking. I've been enjoying movement, exploring the world we live in, but also believe my life has been the pursuit of being in the right place at the right time to experience the best of life. All the stuff in between is just a bunch of noise really. I've been learning how to discern between the voices in my head and the things that ultimately benefit me and bring nourishment to my heart and being able to distinguish the things that don't.

STEVY ILABACA — @ESTY.TOMAS

But it's also funny as well because as I go further through life, it's almost as if the things in the past that I would have strived to obtain, once I kind of let go of them, are now things that I'm tempted by, although the interest is just no longer there for those things. It's interesting for me to see how that has become the case. It's just become much easier to pursue the things that can lead me away from the things that actually benefit me.

Is there anything recently you feel that you have pursued that has taken you away from the space you want to be?

Yeah, I guess social media, funny enough.

It's a huge one, man.

I still think that it's a very experimental time that we live in. Everyone loved smoking cigarettes when they first came out and it's not until like 50 years later that we realized they cause lung cancer. So we're still in the very early stages of our experience with the internet and what we think are the benefits that it brings, but there's also always the thought in the back of the mind that asks the question: What are we doing to ourselves in the long run? So I have this love/hate relationship with it really. My Instagram feed was something that I used back in the days when I was in LA. The day the app was released, basically, a friend told me about it. I enjoyed photography at the time and thought it was a good platform to upload photos that I had taken. And then nowadays, I guess the only reason why it's still there is because it's work related. It's funny really because it's this double-minded mentality. It's no longer something I enjoy but aware that it is work-related, and am on the fringe of questioning whether I need those things.

I've always enjoyed the idea of social media. This idea of attempting to connect people from across seas and having a place to share ideas and information is intriguing. The problem that I see is that it fails at doing those things much of the time or we fail at its utilization.

It's also an excuse to keep people apart, isn't it? Realistically, you only really only ever do what you do so you can be a part of the people group, you know what I mean? Let's be honest, if you were the only person on the planet, you wouldn't enjoy doing parkour as it's meant to be a communal experience.

I enjoy the idea, but at the same time I've realized that there was a time a few years ago that I was being constantly absorbed in it, and it was eating up much of my time in a negative fashion. Recently, I've picked up social media again specifically for work. Like I use it for photography, tattooing, and the magazine, but it is this beast of consummation that is constantly dragging you in. But on top of that, I've realized that I'm terrible at it. Like I think it could be a good skill to have, to become organized and timely, but I'm not good at posting, because I am rather disorganized in that fashion. I think I was posting to my parkour Instagram once every six months or so, and for me, it's so difficult to keep up with because there is no innate desire for it. Like why do I need to post this? Is there a reason I am sharing it?

I really just value face to face interaction these days. Such things like this are an excuse not to be face to face. The reality is, if there was no internet, you would be forced and provoked into making an action to intentionally travel to be surrounded by the people that you believed life was associated with. But at the same time, we're able to connect the way we are now, which is cool because obviously we haven't seen each other in a long time and we haven't spoken. So it's good in some respects, but if you're hungry to seek out life, you want to see it in full, and you want to experience it in full, then it very much exists within a people group, and the internet doesn't help you to distinguish who that people group is. I think there is the fulfillment you get with a community that makes the things that entice us about the internet just less appealing. Again, it makes so much sense that we're able to impact a lot of peoples lives within a second by a post, but my argument would be that yes, that might be the case in the short term because of what you can see physically, but maybe, in the long run, it doesn't have as much of a benefit as we think. I love being creative, I love producing stuff, I love storytelling; to be able to know that you can take an idea and bring it into life – there's just such a beautiful feeling about that. But then at the same time, I also live with an awareness that there is a more organic way of doing that, and it actually brings a greater reward, tenfold, to the quick fix that you get via the short-term, which is everything that revolves around eventually releasing it on the internet.

I definitely agree. I feel that we're easily addicted to that quick-fix. It's like releasing a photography project online instead of in a gallery.

You get the satisfaction from the response, and typically very quickly, but how would it differ if you were in a physical space with your work, interacting with those who were experiencing it? But speaking of creating, you've been doing a bunch of design stuff. How did that come about?

Ah, that's another thing! Yeah, man, I used to do a lot of art when I was younger. One of my brothers was an artist, and I loved just watching him, and I just picked up a pen one day and realized I could draw. Again, I just wanted to do everything my brothers were doing. So I've always had the ability to draw, but kind of lost interest over the years because even the thought of traveling around with a massive pencil case and loads of paper was just not appealing at all. Then I was in LA with my friend who works as a designer creating alien creatures and stuff. I just went over to his house for the day just to learn how to draw for a bit, and within the hour he showed me a bunch of things that I just picked up in a second. As I was coming away from it, he gave me his Wacom tablet, and was just super psyched, so as soon as I got home, I started dabbling with my Mac and the Wacom. Yeah, just loved it. Loved this new world that I was opened up to of digital art and the ability to just create whatever. It's funny, I used to do a bunch when Paint first came out, but that was like pixel by pixel, focusing one dot at a time. But I bought this iPad and over the last few years have been doing some design stuff with Paul Darnell. I've always had this passion for wanting to create a parkour shoe. I've saved basically every other shoe that I've ever bought and have them all in a bag somewhere upstairs. But I had come to the conclusion of this hybrid that I want to create based off of six or seven different pairs of shoes, so I designed something. I was in LA one day, and Paul came to hang out. We were chatting about what we had been up to, and I showed him this design for the shoe, and he digged it and thought we should start something up. The whole thing we were looking at doing was getting enough funding to design the shoe from the ground up instead of taking a mold based off another shoe, which many people do these days. In order to bring to life a parkour shoe that has never been seen before, we'd need close to a mil to create it, basically. So we thought, why not in the meantime pull out a bit of money and look into creating some clothing. So over the last year and a half now have been working towards designing some clothing, and over this next week, will be going down to London to meet with some designers to go over material and things like that. But having a shoe on my feet that I actually love is something that I've always found rather appealing, and the clothing stuff is a stepping stone for being able to create that I guess. But even then, the time that Paul was willing to put a lot of money into the shoe, I had just lost my dad, so it just wasn't my focus and kind of stepped away from it for a while, but obviously, later we on got back together and started working on the clothing.

Because of my work with commercial photography, the Wacom Cintiq Companion, has become just that. I can shoot tethered to the Wacom and have a client see it as it's been edited directly on screen through Lightroom, CaptureOne, and Photoshop and have them seen the change in real-time. Obviously, it's not what their final product is going to be, but I would never show a high-end client the back of my camera screen, and having the Wacom on-location as a solution has been fucking amazing, man.

Mine's like an older model and doesn't have the screen, but that's where the iPad came in – as a step up from that. Was looking into one of the Wacom Cintiq's but just came to the conclusion to go for the iPad for the Apple Pen and its refresh rate.

And how are you liking it? I heard from a few other artist friends that it's really good. What are your thoughts on it?

It's amazing, man. It's incredible. I'm slightly bummed out that the one that I got was the model that came out right before their new release with the pen that you can charge. So that's kind of annoying to know that Apple released that product and then quickly after released the other one knowing that was part of the intention the whole time. But I've enjoyed using it, it's a good piece of gear, man, and especially when they bring out Photoshop for it, which I believe will be announced at some point soon. And that's quite a big deal.

I could definitely get into that - that could be nice.

Yeah, you just had this epiphany moment! Just imagine, you can bring it around in your pocket and you have access to the things you need. It's amazing. But it's been fun drawing and working on the digital art stuff. Again, the Instagram page was just a place to upload some of my work, and then I said to myself that over this next year that I would start drawing more. So that's kind of the plan.

In terms of the clothing, I like the fact that you decided to take it as a stepping stone for the shoe because I feel like it's always such a hard realization when we have these grandiose ideas, and the means to create them right then isn't present. I've also entertained the idea of creating a shoe over the years, because I love minimal wear, but every time someone releases a parkour shoe, it never feels like an honest fit for parkour. Recently, I've been enjoying the Vans UltraRange, and I dig them, but the mesh is easily ripped through, the padding is too thick for me, but the grip and foam they've used is brilliant. Plus, they look relatively good. So if I could mix this with a Feiyue and Onitsuka Tiger, I'd have something beautiful. But like you said, to have something built from the ground up and in quantity is easily a million, if not more. I was in talks with some producers in Thailand and Bangladesh, and while I am working to get a prototype made, the prices to actually produce them are fucking insane.

Yeah, I spent quite a bit of money some years ago working with a factory in China, but it came to the point where to really get it done well, it would have meant me going out there, and at that point, I was just like nope, not worth it.

So what are you thinking in term of clothing?

The whole thing we're looking to tackle is introducing the fashion industry to functional stuff, where you could go out training and then after head straight to the bar and be able to chill in that environment. Even with the footwear, it's like, bringing that steez that just isn't there. Yes, it's about functionality - it's about the way the shoe performs, but it should look good as well. I just don't think we've got around to it yet.

I think there are some that have gotten close. I don't know if you got a chance to fuck with STR/KE MVMNT yet, but if you haven't, you need to. Strike's kicks look great and they function.

I actually have no idea what that is.

They're easily one of the best all-around shoes I have used for parkour. They're not a parkour shoe but a functional trainer with fashion in mind. And like you said, I would love to be capable of training in a dirty environment, be able to wipe my shoes off and head to the club. And these are close.

Ah, that's cool man, I'll definitely have to look into them. Yeah, for me, it's just taking the 18 years of parkour experience and trying to create fashionable footwear for anyone that moves. I think a lot of brands try to create functional shoes and some of them are really amazing. Like I can look at the Adidas Boost, and it's a sick shoe, but it's still not quite there. Don't get me wrong, that material that they've created for the sole is just incredible in the sense that it just doesn't compress over time, which baffles me, but the sock kind of vibe at the top is just not useable. So there are all sorts of brands that are sort of there, and there has been a bit of a spike over the last four to five years where fashion has taken this new direction with sort of an assassin or ninja influence, but the feeling of someone's genuine expertise just hasn't come through yet. I feel that I, and I feel that you as an artist as well, would be confident what I can bring about. And I'm not saying there aren't a lot of other people who know how to create a shoe, because they have lots of experience with parkour shoes, but being able to design and draw out what you see in your head, it does require someone that can draw and who has that kind of experience. I've often thought about the kind of Kickstarter route of putting stuff together that gets people excited enough to back it and get behind it, believing in the person that's bringing it about, so I don't know. I've often thought about that, again, I'm just not the type of dude who has the drive to bring that about really.

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That's fair. However, I do feel like it could go over very well, maybe if you had other people who were willing to devote the time to that aspect, allowing you to be the face of the project. But having somebody else work the campaign itself could be a potential option and would go over well, especially in conjunction with the creation of your clothing.

Yeah, it'd be cool, man! In the meantime, I'm just going to continue drawing designs, do it because I'm enjoying it, but I'm also aware of the route that I can take it, whether or not I'm using my reputation as a way of achieving it. But for me that's already achieved within my mind; therefore I don't find that as appealing as the other ways it could happen. And I think there are other ways in which it can happen, it's just being in the right place at the right time - connecting with the right sort of people who believe in the vision, and get it, and if it will happen, it will happen. And then there's the other way of knowing how to ensure that it happens, but it doesn't give you the satisfaction really, I don't know. It tends to be the way that many things turn out for me in some respects. I can look at ways of making money, like right now I'm absolutely skinned – I've got no money whatsoever. But there have been so many different routes along my path, and even now, there's tons of things that will bring me a good income, but it ultimately doesn't lead me down a path where my hearts' content, you know what I mean?

And if you're not content...

Yeah, because I'll achieve those things that everyone seems to be somewhat after, but I know for a fact that it won't resolve what is in my heart currently. So that's the catch-22, that's the dilemma with this whole thing. Realistically, we're future builders. You can imagine a future and go out and create it, and if you know you have the capacity to do that and that nothing can stop you then. Then the question lies, well if you know you can go out and achieve anything and do those things, what does give you satisfaction then? It just brings me back to the belief that there is something more - there's more than what we see, there's more than what we taste, touch. Life is more real in the unseen than in what we can tangibly see. But it's just when we are bold enough to muster ourselves in such a way that it gives room for it to exist.

Exactly. And going back to this fork in the path, if you chose the path of least resistance, utilizing this platform, person, an idea that you've developed around yourself in order to push this project, you aren't going to be fulfilled. But if you choose the path of most resistance, and create something from the least that you can, from what may feel like nothing – taking the path that is far more challenging, the thing that is uncertain, and we know less about, is going to be the thing that you reap the most reward from. Why wouldn't you take the path of most resistance?

Yeah, if you allow it to happen organically, you may end up there or you may not. You'll never truly know, and all you can really rely on is the material that is available to you today. I find that the more we project ourselves into a future that we think of, the more we restrict and limit ourselves in a potential future that is far beyond the imagination. To experience that future, to experience that in our now, requires being available. You have to make yourself available to it. I can fathom the future of creating a shoe and making a shit load of money. I would only ever be creating a shoe because I want to create a shoe, that's the only intention. But I also know that money will come through it, and with a lot of that money comes this sense of security and that makes it almost easier to fall back on this life that you created for sustainability rather than falling back into the mindset. And I'm not saying that having nothing is better than having it all, but if it costs you the ability or opportunity to be available for something money can't buy, then I'd rather have nothing. So I don't want to rule out those who are in pursuit of such things because it doesn't matter regardless. But I do know from my own life experience that from where I've started through life, if I start fabricating a future for myself...Let's put it this way, you're only ever going to fabricate a future in your head if you've given up on the belief that there is something beyond you out there that you were created to extend it to. There was a quote that popped up on my Instagram a while ago that said 'the narrative you believe changes the world you perceive' and narrative for me plays a big part of our experience of existence. What you're willing to settle with becomes the extent of your existence. It's interesting.

Yes, yes it is, but before we continue on with one of my favorite subjects for my own guilty pleasure, I want to quickly ask a question that our editor Bear wanted me to ask you. You already touched on it a tiny bit, but I'd rather not forget to ask. I'm going to rephrase it a little, but how do you believe being in the limelight has impacted your training or life and how you do you feel you've been changed after leaving the public eye digitally? Because I don't think you've left the public eye and I don't think you've stopped connecting with people.

It's interesting because this is all based on a belief system. I believe that we're created to shine and we're created to stand out, but I find that there's two ways for your light to be seen: we're having a conversation now and I can see you because of the pixels and stuff that create light and goes into my eye kind of thing. For me, that's not the sort of light that we're created to shine by. It all comes down to my faith in Christ really. It was spoken in the scripture to let your light shine before men, but I think the light that was being referred was the light that comes by face to face interaction. Even if it's identical to the way you'd interact with people face to face as you would over the internet, that medium for me wasn't the light that was being spoken of. It's funny because it just so happens to be the very world that I'm invited to invest in.

The moment I started shining is the moment I started getting all of these opportunities and all these offers to go to other places to shine and shine in front of the people, shine on tv, and everything else. Everything just pushed in that direction really, and my instinct told me to somewhat step away from it all, but at the same time, I'm still in that world. But I think you've hit the nail on the head that expresses the dilemma with the condition of the human mind these days. I think you've voiced it very well on behalf of the people that only see life happening if it's happening on the internet. The reality is, life happens all of the time. And so, when someone asks me if I'm still training - there's never a day where I'm not training. There's never a day that I haven't taken my experiences through parkour and put it into practice - whether I'm moving or not moving, wherever I am, whatever I'm doing - I'm looking at things like obstacles to overcome with the full confidence that I have to overcome that which I am faced with. And it really does all just boil down to the choice of how much I want something or not. If I want it, I'll take it, and if I don't, then I'll walk away. So then the question lies: well what do I want? And then the question becomes: what does drive me? For me, it's the reality that nothing is more to life than we're currently experiencing. Everything from the scripture, when you think about the stories from the Bible, is God's way of showing man this issue: we have to settle for less than the best. We always have the tendency to settle for anything but the best, which is such a baffling thought. And for me, I hold onto that narrative because it's what gives my life meaning. I believe that I'm a created being and I believe that there's a creator, God - that there's intention and reason to my life. That every single day my choices impact eternity. The thing I believe about myself, the things that I take from each day, either create a tomorrow that is a new experience or a wrestle with those things, and I'm overwhelmed by the things of today, where tomorrow doesn't seem too far from what today felt like..

I think one of these days soon I'm going to have to make my way out your way so that we can have more conversation outside of this screen.

I'd love that, bro. I'm all for that. I think that my current approach and thoughts are leaned in the direction of - I'm questioning whether I should completely disconnect from everything. Bang. Just go cold turkey, and never touch it ever again and just be this person that is all about living life to the full and investing in every single person I see face to face. But at the same time, it's like knowing that like, I'm plugged in right now, I've spoken to you and through this conversation you had the whole grit to be like, "Man, we need to meet up and speak face to face because there's more to go on and talk about." And that creates the space for a moment of complete disconnect. And whatever takes place in a moment of disconnect can be just as impactful as my pondering thoughts as to if it benefits me more to come away from it altogether. Still trying to work that out.

Typically I find that there is a balance with everything. Does the balance come with being this individual that lives 100% through everything that they do, but you're still doing the things that you could be within this space, or does the balance come from continuing to do those things while also taking what this space has to offer? Or maybe it's something else, I don't know.

It's hard to know because it's too early to see the ramifications of what the internet's going to cause in the future. So the only thing we have to rely on is your feeling, and if I'm getting the sense that what I'm currently investing in does not benefit me, then what do I do about that? Whenever I've been faced with something that doesn't have a benefit to me in my heart, it actually robs me of the joy. In the past, it was easy to just say no to those things and just disconnect, but we're talking about something that supposedly connects everyone in such a big way, and to say bye to that is like quite a big jump basically. But then again parkour is about overcoming obstacles and jumping gaps.Either way, the space should be created to ponder over such things, but whatever comes from the space of conversation and the thoughts of the mind should never be discussed with phones around.

Anything that comes from the mind of concern, and knowing that we have the freedom to explore different futures – I just think wisdom looks a lot like talking about those things with a complete disconnect. And when I say disconnect I mean not just go for a walk and talk with your phone around, but I'm talking about leaving your phone in the house, going off into the woods, and having a conversation with someone, and that whatever takes place in that woods is not something that is discussed anywhere else. For me, that's wisdom.

The internet, where it could go, and developing technology is a lot. I used to live with a friend, Lucas Dimoveo who worked for a group of transhumanists and biohackers. Essentially they are people who are looking to be the absolute best versions of themselves, but through the singularity; the point in which man and machine merge. Which as an idea, for me, is insane. I can see it from science-fiction, I can imagine it, I can see that future, but is that the future that I want? Not personally, as I'm more concerned with what the things I have been given are capable of, but I do find the idea intriguing – like what possibilities exist there?

For every industrialized, hard-edged way of looking at life, there's an organic way. So whatever you think about the future in relation to what technology can provide, there must be an equal opposite within what the organic can produce. And I would say to believe in that requires faith because it's too lofty in the mind of the scientist or someone who believes technology to be the way of human progress.

Once again, I think that there is a balance to be found here. I don't think technology is the way forward, but I do believe that technologies exist that can benefit us. I am a firm believer in the idea that everything is one, that everything is connected, that we ourselves are creators, that we are this powerful force that was created by whatever created us. That we ourselves are that force. Or maybe that's it's that we have just always been. I can't pretend to know that I understand it, but I do feel it and think that we have the answers to that progress within us.

There's a difference though. There's a difference...discovering knowledge with your current assumption of who you are is different than discovering knowledge with your identity already being spoken over you. One leads to one thing and the other leads to another.

That's an interesting thought. I like that. Would you go into that a little more?

Choice is the biggest gift that we're given. Choice has ramifications. If you do one thing, it does something good, and if you do the other, it does something bad. Or that leads us to debate what is good and what is bad. Let's just say that killing someone is bad because we both agree that it is and that loving them is actually good. The fact that you have an awareness, that you have the choice to love or to hate, and you have some inclination that you're a created being - we're not talking to the atheist right now, we're talking to you, who just said it yourself that you believe there is some sort of higher force - that we've been given the choice to act out against something that is contrary to what we believe ourselves to truly be. Then it establishes a healthy kind of fear of knowing that there are consequences to our choices. Then it causes you to ponder, well how do you determine and have a certain mind on your decision making as what truly is the right thing to do and what truly is the wrong thing to do? What I've often found is, like a child, for instance, will knock a glass off of a table and it'll smash. They're young enough that they're doing it trying to make sense of the physical realm around them. Then the reaction they get from everyone else teaches them that what they just did was not a good thing because this person is now reacting, maybe not showing too much, but their initial reaction was a shocking reaction and it teaches them to some degree that maybe this thing has value. So the moment they do it again, they do it knowing that the thing has value. Yeah, it's interesting. It's also hard to have this sort of conversation over the phone really.

That'll do for now, but maybe when we meet up, we can ponder over that question more.

Definitely! We can ponder over it, and I'll make sure to have my blades.

Yeah, man! We'll definitely go for a sesh. It's sick to see that you're still committed to being out in Mexico, and next time I'm out there we'll have to hang out, or I'll see you out this way. Bless you, bro! It was good to talk to you again, it's been a long time.

Of course! Until then, brother, I'll let you get out of this digital space and enjoy the rest of your night!I'm sure there will be more. Much love!

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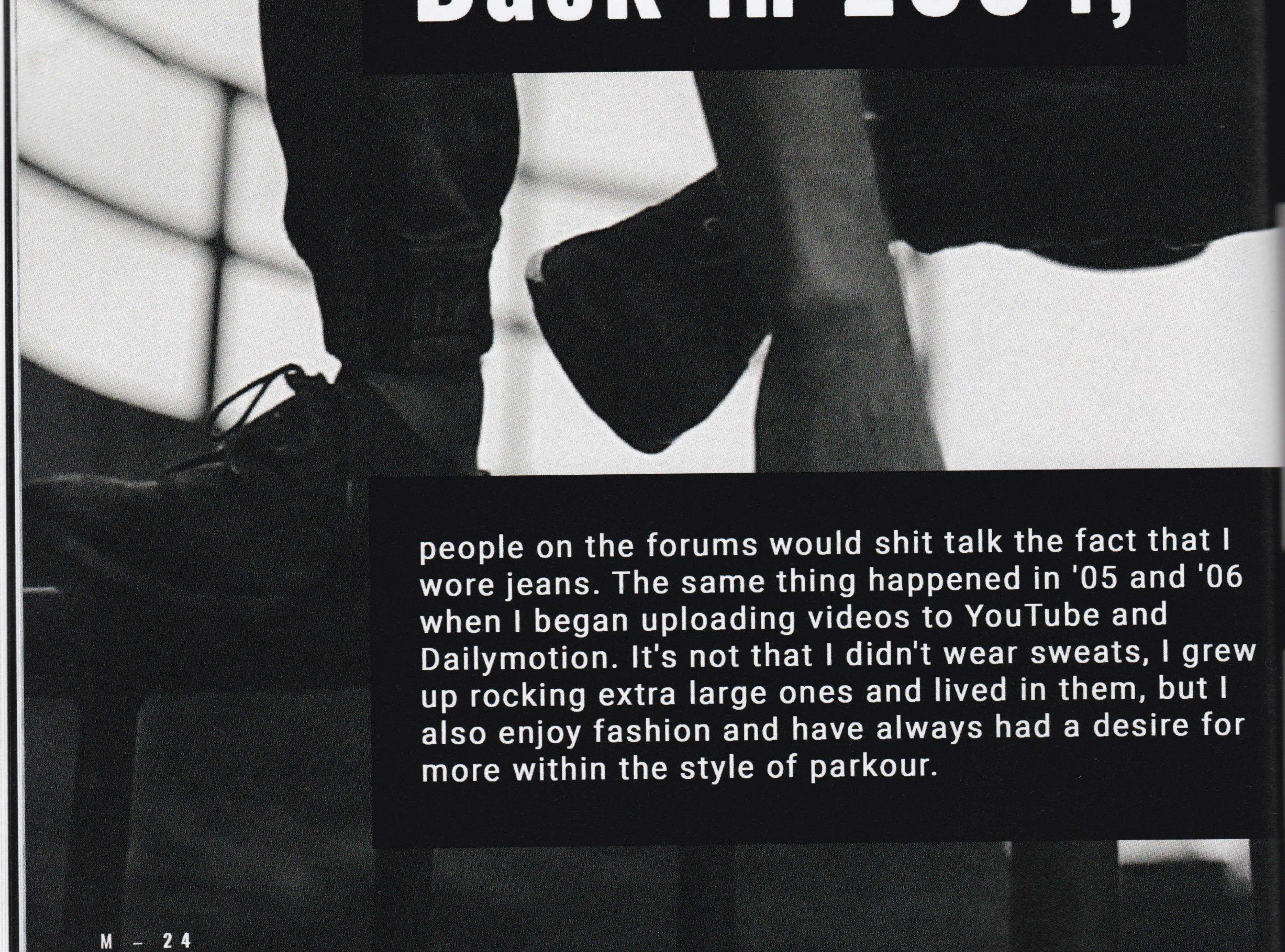
Back in 2004,



people on the forums would shit talk the fact that I wore jeans. The same thing happened in '05 and '06 when I began uploading videos to YouTube and Dailymotion. It's not that I didn't wear sweats, I grew up rocking extra large ones and lived in them, but I also enjoy fashion and have always had a desire for more within the style of parkour.

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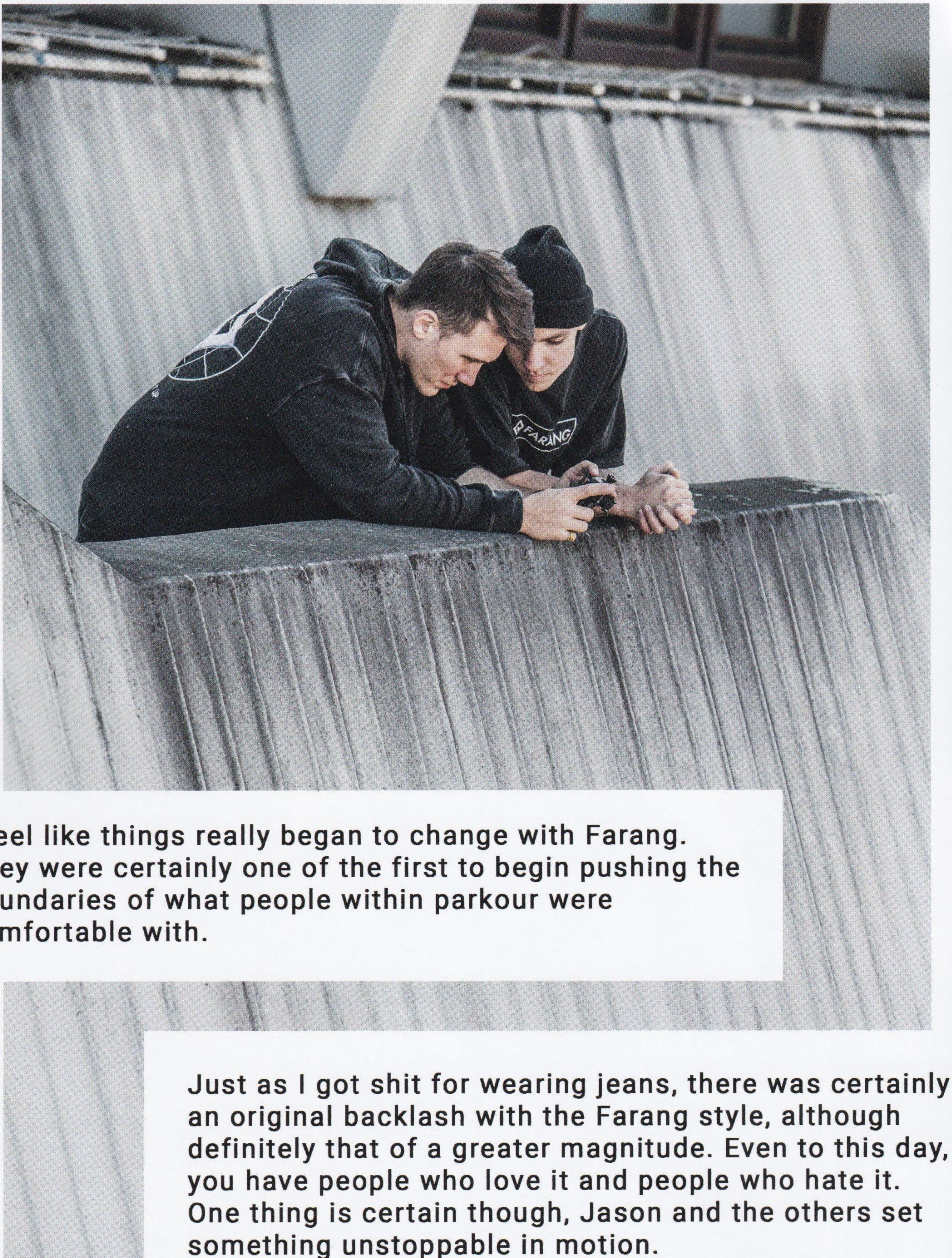

I feel like things really began to change with Farang. They were certainly one of the first to begin pushing the boundaries of what people within parkour were comfortable with.

Just as I got shit for wearing jeans, there was certainly an original backlash with the Farang style, although definitely that of a greater magnitude. Even to this day, you have people who love it and people who hate it. One thing is certain though, Jason and the others set something unstoppable in motion.

FARANG
FARANG

FARANO
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FARANO

Like some of the others, I certainly don't like everything that Farang has produced, but I applaud them for pushing the boundaries through experimentation.

What I do like from the Farang line is that it falls somewhere between skate-inspired streetwear with a parkour vibe, particularly the Winter 2018 collection, and our culture's cliche of the urban ninja, with all of their beautiful oversized black and harem pieces.

Not only have Farang moved forward what our culture deems as acceptable attire, but they've also raised the production quality standard of attire within parkour. They were certainly one of the first to begin creating custom designed, high-quality garments and not just printing graphics on re-branded Gildan tees. The Winter 2018 Collection is the perfect testament to this with their oversized tops sporting dropped shoulders and their beautifully designed, snow-washed stretch jeans with bronze-zippered legs. It is easily the most well-produced and cohesive collection from a parkour brand that I have had the pleasure of wearing on my body. Not only that, but Farang has filled that early desire for more stylish training attire.

FARANG

This collection feels like an important milestone along with the release of their new shoe, both for them and within our culture's fashion. I imagine that Farang will continue leaping into uncharted territory, continuing to leave their mark on our culture by just making it up as they go.

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FARANG

ELEVATE

REVIEW

FARANG
FARANG

> Farang has been producing fashionable parkour culture inspired wear for years now, but the Elevate is the company's first leap into the world of shoe production.

The first thing we noticed right out of the bag (yes, they come in a very nice custom bag), is that the Elevate is stylish.

Training? Check.

Nightclub? Check.

The build and style seemed quite like the Adidas Element Refresh, and upon further inspection, we realized that the Elevate has similar cushioning, similar sole curvature, and the same sole design but replaced with Farang branding. While the Element Refresh clearly inspires Farang's design, they are not the same. The Elevate is made with different material and has a different overall design. While the Elevate is sleek, minimal, and a great looking shoe, the back flex printed Farang logo color is a little odd. If it does not glow in the dark...

The Elevate sports a one-piece rubber sole that is super grippy on most surfaces but is also slippery as fuck on some surfaces - particularly marble, smooth concrete, certain brick, and dusty surfaces. We almost died running through the Mexico City metro, sliding into one person and slipping in front of a metro car while running to make the train. Also for the record, there is some black magic at work, as the grip doesn’t need to be broken in at all and continues to get better with time.

In terms of build and construction, these things are tanks - definitely solid and not breaking down anytime soon, but also lighter than they seem. Not the lightest shoes ever, but what you trade for in weight is made up for in durability. The Elevate also has a wider toe box so your toes won't get smashed together, and the shoes are really comfortable unless you get the wrong size. They also seem to sit oddly on some ankles, causing irritation, particularly on those with a lower ankle bone. They either seem to fit perfectly or rub you the wrong way.

The cushion, while thick, is on the soft and flexible side. The front padding is the perfect thickness, and we wish it were the same across the sole instead of having a considerably raised heel. Regardless of the over-protection on the heel end, they have an impressive amount of ground feel throughout.

In conclusion, the Farang Elevate is beautifully designed, offers an overall solid performance, and is a balanced choice for a parkour shoe. They have flawless grip on most surfaces and terrible grip on a few materials. They are a medium weight shoe with great construction and are super comfortable unless you have low ankle bones.

WATCH

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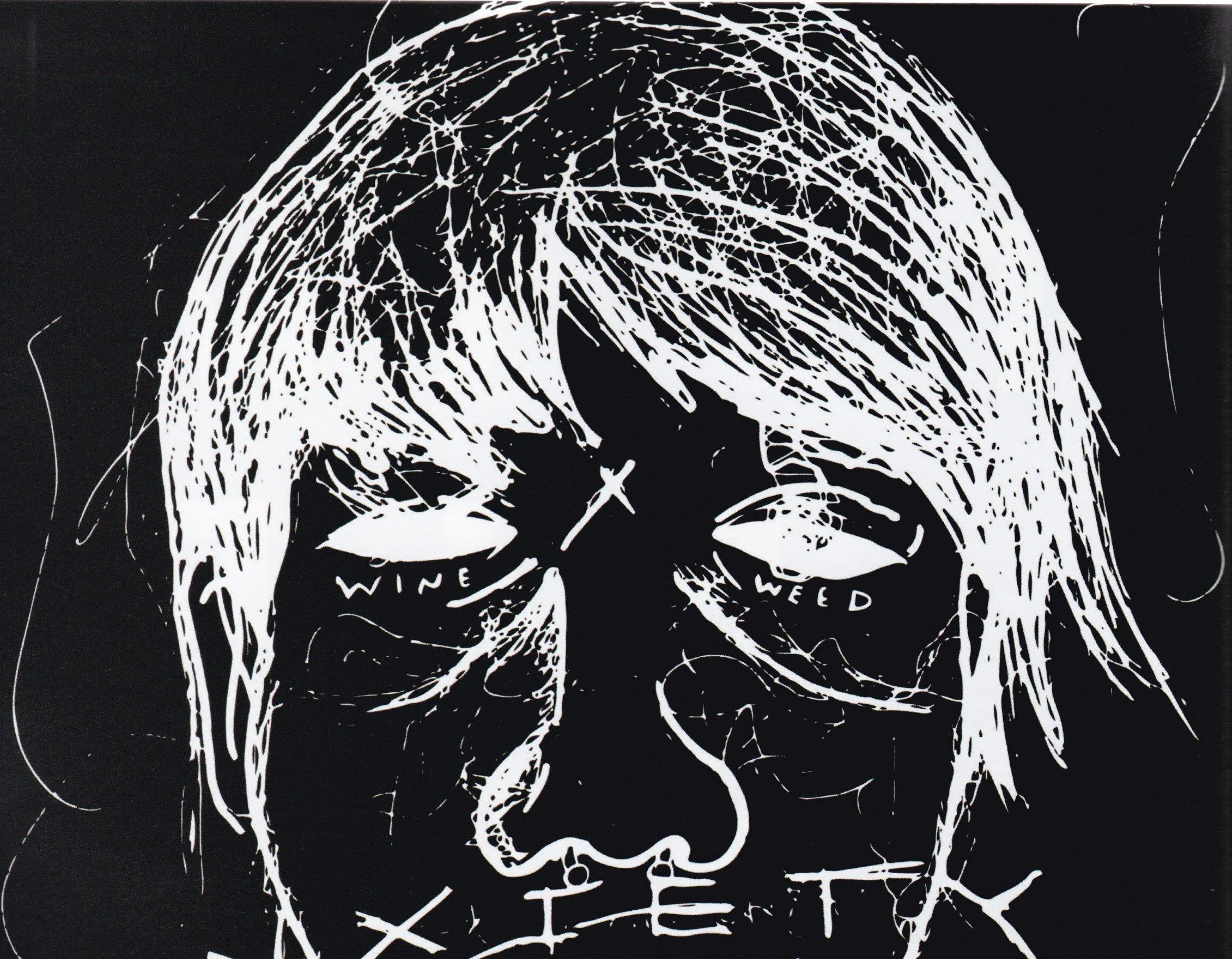

ANXIETY AND DRUGS DEPRESSION

A LOOK INTO
MENTAL HEALTH, ADDICTION,
& HOW INJURY WITHIN
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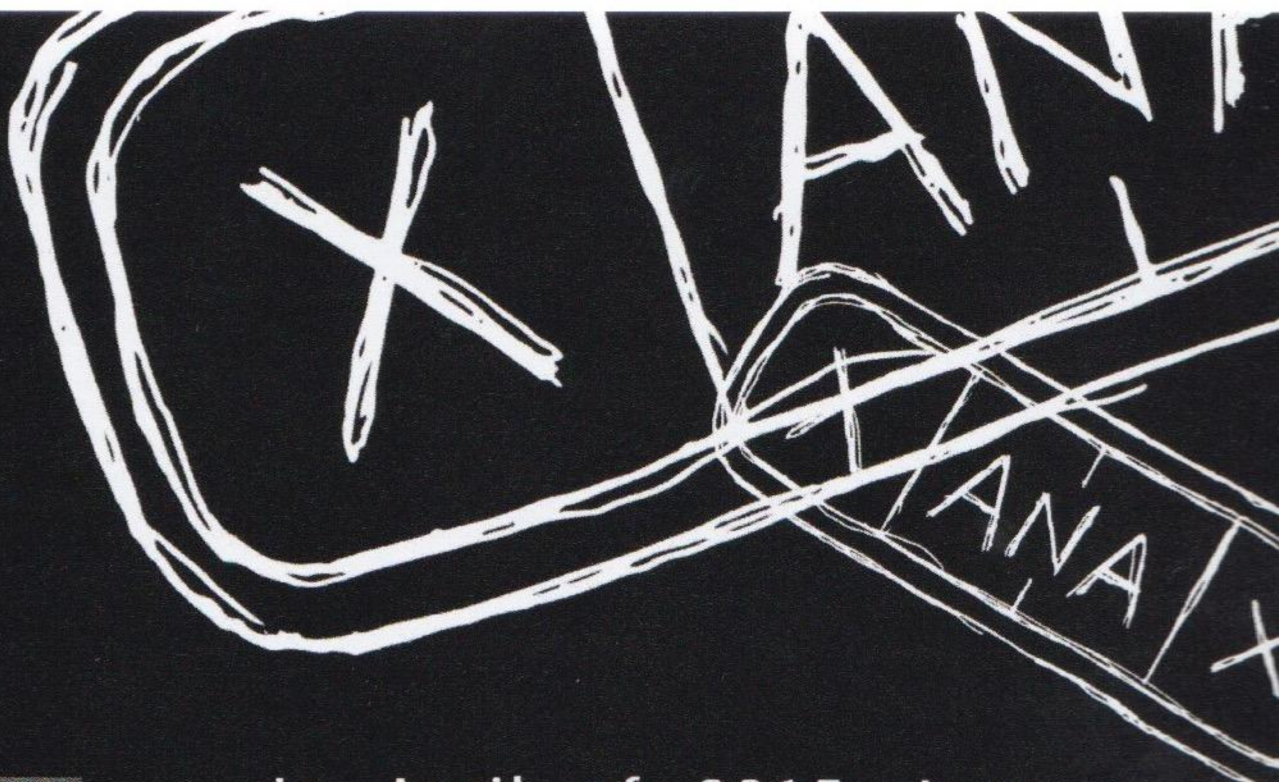

THE HIGHS & LOWS

BY JACE ILEY

Back in June 2014, I was at the height of my parkour career. I made good money teaching over the summer and had just left my gym in Colorado for family issues back in Florida. That was when I started to smoke weed more often.

My family history is a huge mess. My grandfather killed himself a few years before I was born and I never had a dad or any sort of fatherly figure. My mom was diagnosed with Lyme disease when I was 14, which ironically is when I started training. So I've been sort of raising myself emotionally since then.

That August, I had a major injury where I tore a few tendons in my foot and it ended up keeping me out of the game for about 11 months. In that time, my mental health and self-worth declined and my weed consumption went way up to "cope" with my pain, or my excuse at the time, boredom. I basically went insane. My life revolved around smoking and doing anything I could to fill the hole parkour left. I had started training when I was 14 and was then almost 21. I was highly depressed and anxious and my copious weed consumption made things much worse.

In April of 2015, I was Baker Acted, which is what some people call a "72-hour suicide watch". You're put in handcuffs and taken to a hospital psychiatric ward for a minimum of 72 hours. I spent 4 nights and 3 days in this hell hole and it was by far the most traumatic experience of my life. Hospitalization can be positive for some, and honestly, it was necessary, but the problem was - I was trapped there, surrounded by people with extreme anger issues, psychosis, schizophrenia and everything in between. The only person who can get you out is one doctor who's there for only a few hours each day. My time there was a very eye-opening experience and at least left me with some very interesting stories.

After that, I started taking Xanax for my anxiety. It started with 1 MG a day and quickly bumped up to the legal limit of 4 MG a day. That's 120 Xanax a month, and for someone trying to fix their pain with anything they can, it looks like a treasure box. Over the course of maybe 6 months, I was taking 10+ MG or more a day along with 5-10 grams of weed and at least one bottle of wine.

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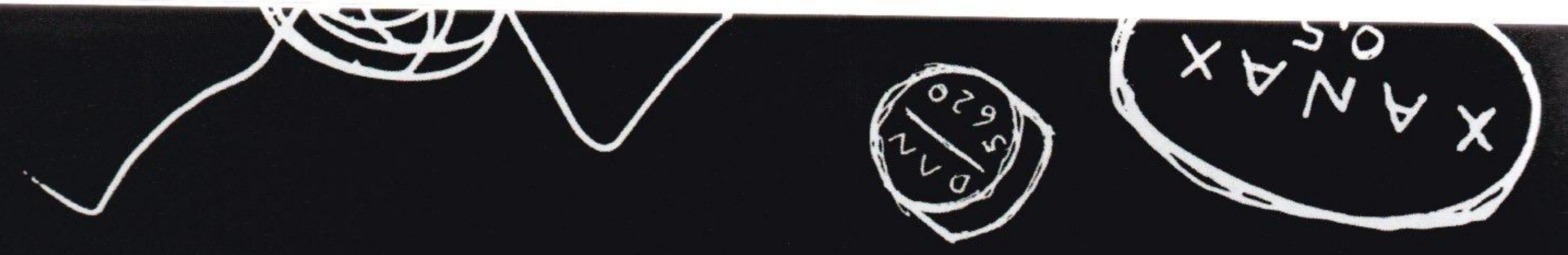


Every day I was as faded as possible and was going through a month supply of Xanax in about a week. My weed consumption also skyrocketed to about $400 weekly.

Over the course of the next year or year and a half (honestly, I don't remember 2015/2016 period), I OD'd 3 times. My last OD was due to a mixture of Xanax, weed, alcohol, and morphine. It was the closest to death I've ever been and the experience had left me more confused and out of my mind than any other time in my life.

Finally, in early 2017, I decided to go cold turkey from Xanax, which for those that don't know, Xanax in the top 3 things you can withdraw from behind meth and heroin. It was months of laying in bed just trying to keep a grip on reality. My weed consumption kept rising after to make up for my lack of Xanax, a diagnosis of severe black mold poisoning, and having constant injuries while trying to get back to training again. All of that dissolved me mentally into a suicidal, unstable human being with more mental diagnoses and medications than I could count. About 3 months ago, I went sober from smoking and have tried to put my life back together. As more problems pile on, I'm trying to handle them in a more appropriate way than before, however, it's an uphill battle.

I've been diagnosed with chronic depression and anxiety, so I can't speak on what things are like post-depression, but when I was training, it was like a medication. I didn't have a self-image or any self-esteem, so I put it all into parkour. I always surrounded myself with people better than I, with my original mentor being Daniel Arroyo, which was something that continuously pushed me forward. So instead of having "normal" goals or aspirations, I focused on only getting better at parkour. I was already seeing a therapist at a young age, but with parkour, I had something in my life to be proud of.

The minute I had my first serious injury everything went way downhill. I had nothing to validate myself with. When I looked in the mirror, all I saw was a shell of a person without parkour. It put me in a very dark place and I made the mistake of trying to fill it with drugs, which is a very short-term fix, but before you know it, you're in a hole that you can't get out of.

It's been really rough. At this point, I've been sober from Xanax for a little over a year and 3 months sober from everything else. Unfortunately, there have been serious side effects after how much I abused them. With those repercussions along with the brain swelling and memory loss associated with black mold poisoning, I have a large part of the last few years completely erased from my memory. It gets easier some days and harder other days, but I learned that I can't let that stop me. I still crave drugs and the feeling of being "normal" mentally; a feeling that I believe most people take for granted.

When it comes to the parkour mentality, you hear people say things like "parkour has taught me a lot about getting over obstacles both mentally and physically" and I think most of the time that's total bullshit. In many ways, it teaches you that avoiding obstacles is the easiest way of dealing with things. I understand the argument "when I'm afraid of a jump and overcome it, it helps me overcome things in life" but that's a lot more talk than action. Many parkour athletes have no plan for the future other than their progression in parkour which, just like doing a run or a jump, is a very short-term way of thinking.

420 x
WEED,
WINE,
& XANAX

The only viable way to make money in parkour is to own a gym or go into stunt work, neither of which is actually doing parkour. Personally, I find when I focus too hard on progressing in parkour, I put my future and things that genuinely matter in the back it back of my mind to make things easier.

I understand the mindset of not needing to live a normal life, but earning a living is a lot more than just overcoming the fear of a jump or flip. I'd love it if parkour became a way to make good money, but even people like Nyjah Houston, a professional skateboarder who makes amazing money, is only going to last until his physical health declines. For instance, Tony Hawk makes most of his money off of his video games and his insane popularity outside of just the realm of skateboarding. I've realized that I have put parkour on the back burner and started focusing on what I'm going to do for sustaining myself and possible family when I'm past the age of progression.

Injuries bring problems to the surface and create the issue of having to deal with real life for a while, which is a scary thought for many athletes since they live so much in the moment. If you are dealing with an injury or suffering from depression or some other mental illness, you are not alone, but also the majority. Seek professional help, just talking to someone can help immensely. Try going back to your first days' training and remember what it felt like to suck and work through things and apply that to something else you can love respectably. I believe it's important for us to find other passions in life that we enjoy as much as parkour. We don't yet live in a world where parkour can make an actual living, except for maybe 1% of the community, so start thinking about an actual future for yourself. How you would sustain yourself or your family in the long run? You may peak in parkour but that's a very small percentage of the time you have here statistically on Earth. It's something that's hard to come to terms with, but looking for other things you're passionate about is extremely important.

It's not easy, I'm still in the process of doing so even after realizing this years ago, but that doesn't make it any less important. Don't let it define you: parkour isn't who you are, it's what you do, and there are many other opportunities within life outside of moving.

After an injury, or just in general, it's important to understand that it's normal to feel depressed and you shouldn't look at it as your life ending. You'll be able to train again, but in the meantime, take the time to really reflect on your life.

What happens after parkour? Where would I like to see myself in 10 years? Would you like to be living on your own? Would you like to have a stable income? Do you want to live in a specific place? Just vague goals that you can work toward. Realize what else is really important in your life. Imagine if you could never train again, what would you do? All these questions are things that we'd like to pretend will go away, but they won't. Life doesn't stop when you're done training, it begins.

"THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I HAD FELT GENUINELY HAPPY

@JACEILEY

WITHOUT DRUGS."

THE SAME CHAMPION

INTERVIEW WITH EXATLŌN WINNER **JOSÉ RODRÍGUEZ**

STORY BY ANDREW OBENREDER

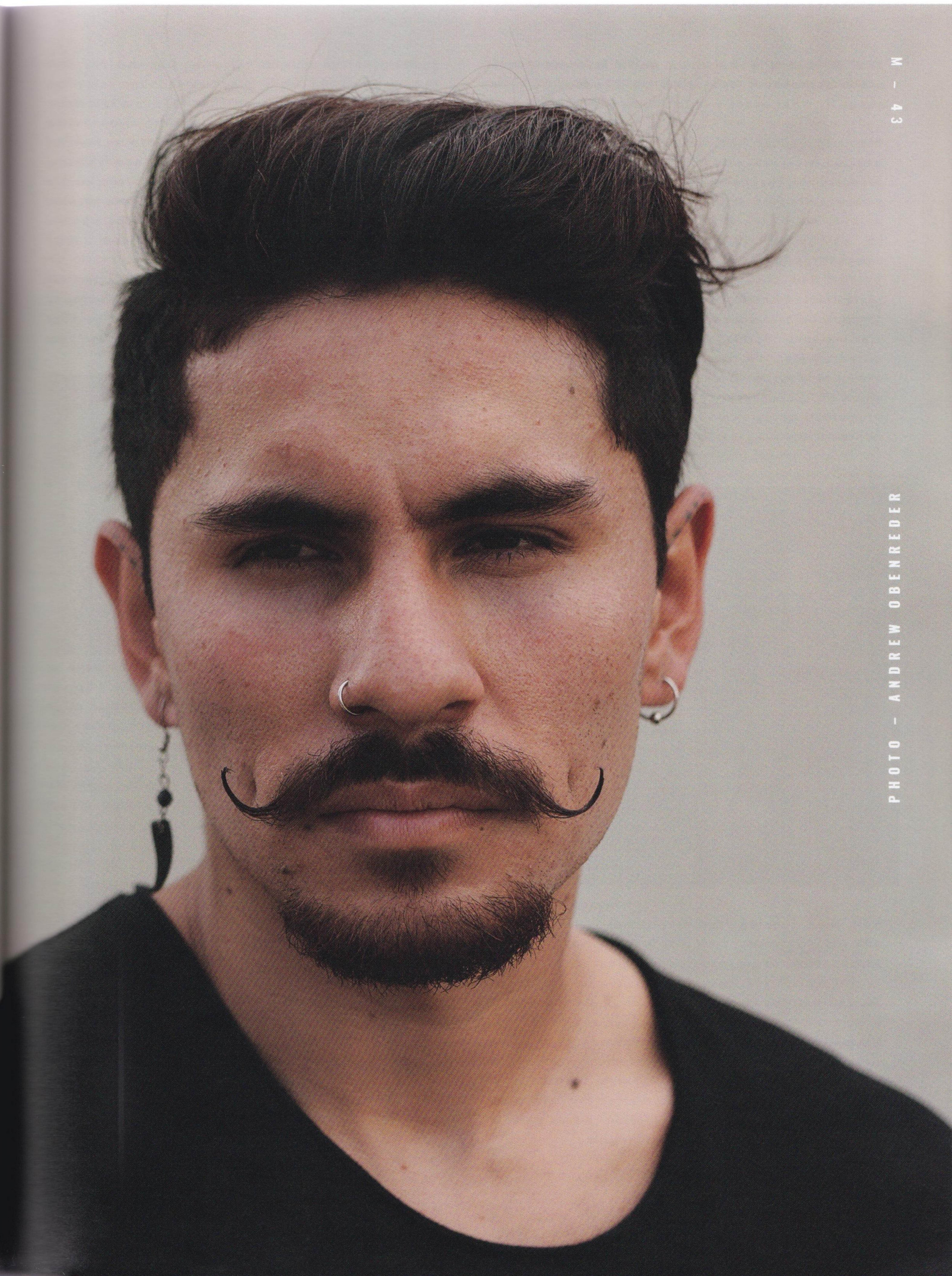


PHOTO — ANDREW OBENREDER

So it's been a while since we've last seen each other because of your time on Exatlōn. Tell me about it. What exactly is Exatlōn?

Basically, Exatlōn is a reality show in which you are isolated from all the things you have, like social networks and the money you owe your family. Without a doubt, it is an unforgettable experience.

So as a reality show, was it an authentic competition, or was it staged?

Exatlōn is an entirely true experience in which what happens on the screen is what actually happened in that instance. Nothing is manipulated nor is there a script in which they tell you "We want you to do this." That is why for me it was a totally real experience in which absolutely everything that happened, even my triumph, was by my own merits and without the manipulation of agents.

EXATLŌN
COLOMBIA

Well, then, fucking congratulations!

Thanks, bro!

So, you won the show...

When I left for Exatlōn, I really just wanted to spend some time to raise money and continue with my life in Mexico. Little by little, I got closer to the final, and little by little, I got better and started thinking that I could win. Maybe it was an opportunity that parkour was giving me for all my years of training.

Besides that, in addition to having won the jackpot, I had already won many other things, including the opportunity to tell my family that I was in a television program, and learning a lot of meditation from having so much free time. I was able to sit on a rock at the beach for eight hours looking at the sea, thinking about what I want in my life, what I want from people who are close to me, and wondering if I'm doing what I really want with my life. When I left having won the jackpot, I knew I had already won and matured a lot.

I think that Exatlōn made me a winner from the day they called me and told me "We would love for you to be in Exatlōn!" I already felt like the winner because they said these kinds of things, and in the end, I have the trophy.

For me, it was as if life had told me "You have struggled so hard for so many years to live parkour in order to achieve something great, and you've waited for your moment after crying so many times..."

After feeling frustrated and like you are not doing anything, and that you could not travel, and that you could not do one thing or the other, life gives it back to you and tells you how you are doing it well...keep on doing parkour and going forward.

So it sounds that Exatlōn gave you much more than just the paycheck you were looking for. Out of all the things you brought back, which were some of the most important for you?

When people ask me what I won from Exatlōn, I always answer in the following order:

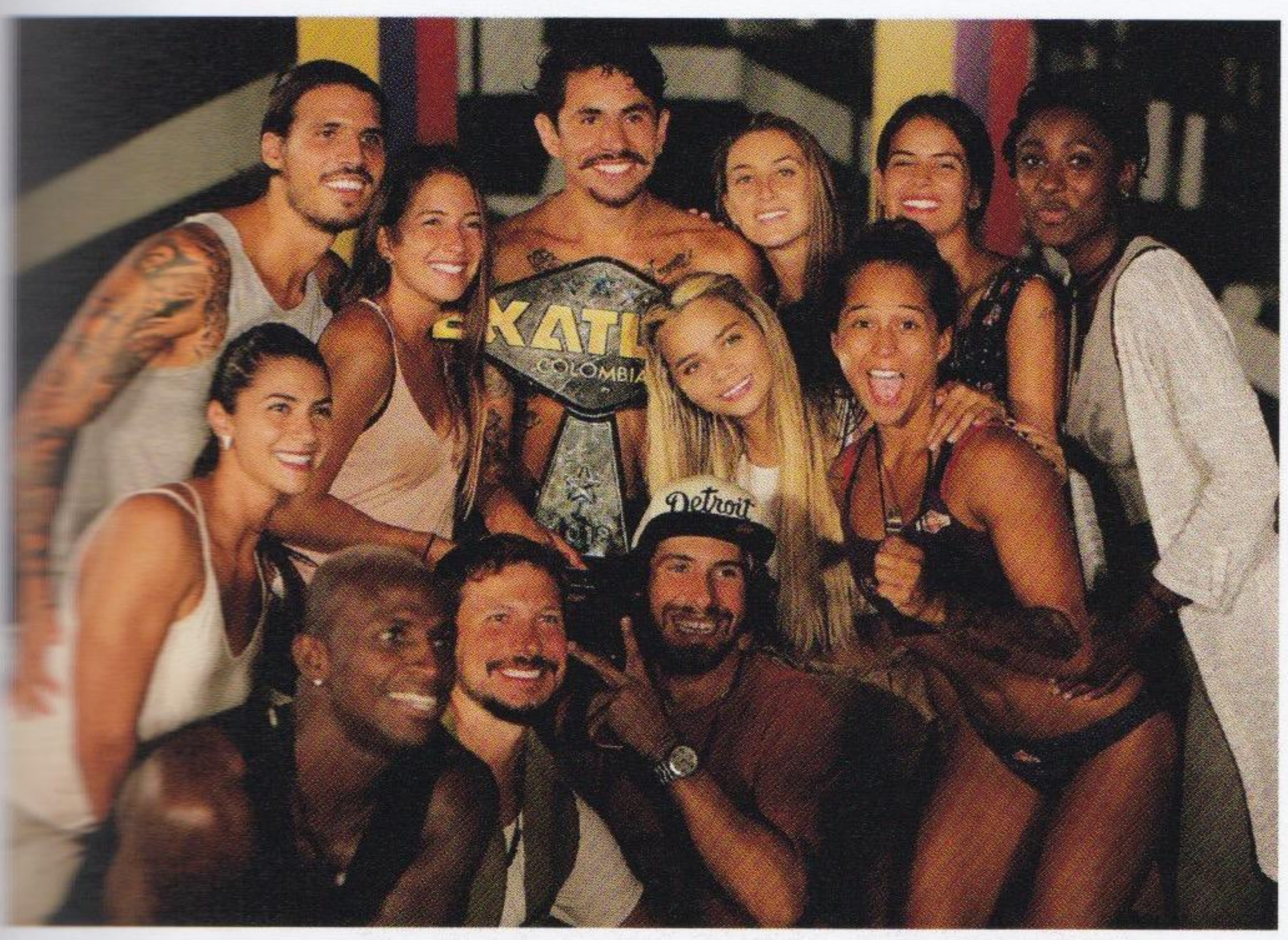
First, I won friends.

Second, I won great experiences, things I had never done like diving, balloon riding, sailing on a catamaran, and apart from that, much learning on the beach. I understand a lot more about myself, and now I know what I really want from life.

Third, I won a trophy.

Lastly, I won a check with a lot of money that I never imagined I would have. For me, it was surprising and changed my life, but even with the money, I am still the same me.

With the money I earned, I have bought absolutely nothing. Neither a car nor a house, because I am not interested in it. The purpose I have found is to spread parkour in Colombia. People know more about parkour because of what I did. I talked all the time about how parkour had changed my life, and people recognize me and admire me for that. That makes me very proud because they know me for being who I am, not because I don't know how to do something else. Besides that, I want to use my opportunity to educate the people of my country so that they know more about this discipline, and so that they can be masters in order to professionalize parkour. This will create more market opportunities so that people who live parkour can get ahead in life.



So even though the show gave you so much, was there anything that it took away or changed?

Without a doubt, it taught me many things, including how to value the most insignificant things. I remember the first time I heard music, the first time I saw people in a mall with normal clothes, and the first time I used a cell phone after the show. It was all very strange. When I left the program I did not want to use my cell phone; I wanted to be with my family. For the first week after leaving the program, I remember that I did not use it simply because I wanted to enjoy people's company and a good chat. That generated my good habits as well, and now when I'm with someone, I try to use my cell phone as little as possible. I try to spend more of my life in real time than virtual time.

In addition to that, it made me mature very much and made me realize how much I love the people around me, and more than anything it was a very good challenge. Nothing about me has changed. I'm still the same. I still have the same friends, we eat the same things, and we go to the same places. Everyone is equal, and I see myself as no better than anybody else. I think they know how I've handled all of the profits I had in the program and how it has been positive for the rest of me.

How much prize money did you walk away with, and aside from the prize money, were you also paid for your work on the show?

If you worked for the program you were paid something because it's like a job, you know? If you spent four months away from real life, you'd have a lot of debts or things like that. That's precisely why they pay you, and in the end, the jackpot is 600 million Colombian pesos. That's like 200,000 US dollars.

I feel that it's safe to assume that 600 million Colombian pesos is a shit ton of money in Colombia. What do you plan to do with that money?

Well initially I wanted my own parkour gym, but I was presented with the opportunity to be involved with another project, so I'm going to invest in my future in a different way. Being a parkour athlete is a profession in which you do not have a pension at the end, so I want to ensure something for my future. I'll buy a few apartments, and I plan to rent them out to have some secure income. I also plan to continue with my normal life of parkour, to continue to spread parkour everywhere, and to continue to do parkour jobs. What it is that really interests me is that in Colombia, if I wanted I could act or be in a social circle with totally famous people, but I am a parkour athlete. In all reality, I am not a famous person, and at this moment people recognize me for what I did through parkour, but I do not really look for that fame. What I'm looking for is to be happy doing what I'm passionate about, and that's what parkour plans to do all my life.

That's a beautiful thing to hear you say because so many people lose themselves when that kind of money and notoriety comes into their lives, and it's even more interesting to see that you haven't changed. You're the same genuine Jose that I remember from when I first met you. So I already know your plans for parkour and the future, let's take it back to the show. How do you feel parkour helped you there?

Certainly, the parkour was very important, but the most important thing that allowed me to have success in Exatlōn was not just the sport but the emotional part of the relationships. It showed with my new friends, as I stayed strong and did not become a skinny or toxic person in the program. And besides that, it develops not only your physical abilities such as strength, flexibility, and agility but also other skills that develop through the games you play with friends.

Throwing aim played a very important role. Through parkour practice, many times of my life I would go out to play with friends and put up stupid challenges like "How are we going to knock down that bottle," or we would try to make a bottle land a flip. These games developed the skills that made it so that I could win. Besides that, many times I had to limit my skills to be able to win. For example, there was an obstacle that I could overcome in a simple way by doing parkour, but you have to obey all these little rules and play the games the way they were designed. You have to adapt to the rules, the obstacles, and the environment you are in. You must also take into consideration that if you fight somebody, you have to go spend the night in a separate space all by yourself.

So is everything with the show finished, or will you be headed back for another season?

I do not know if it's all over, there are rumors that there may be a hostel later on that leads to the best of each season from each country, but I do not know, it's just a rumor. I hope that it happens so that I am able to go and live another experience like this. I think these are the kinds of experiences everyone should live. It is the only time in which you will be able to be totally disconnected from the whole world; money, social networks, family problems, debts. No doubt I know that I would like to live like that once more, let's hope it happens.

I hope it happens for you again as well. It would be amazing to see you enjoying yourself on TV again. Until that time comes, or it doesn't, what are your plans?

At the moment, I have several personal challenges. I'm learning how to resume my regular life to 100% following Exatlōn; my parkour training is not 100% either because it made me lose some of my physical conditioning. For the moment, I want to recover, and I want to continue spreading parkour and using my media influence to continue doing things in parkour. For example, I want to expand my social networks to make them reach more people so that the community can grow more and more. I'm going to build the first parkour gym in my hometown of Bogotá, Colombia. I want to be supervising that project, and I also want to continue doing what I've always been doing-traveling, inspiring people, telling them how parkour has changed my life and how it can change theirs and conquer all of their personal challenges. I think Exatlōn is not my peak, although it is a very high achievement. I am 25 years old, I still have a long way to go, and I have many more goals to accomplish with parkour.

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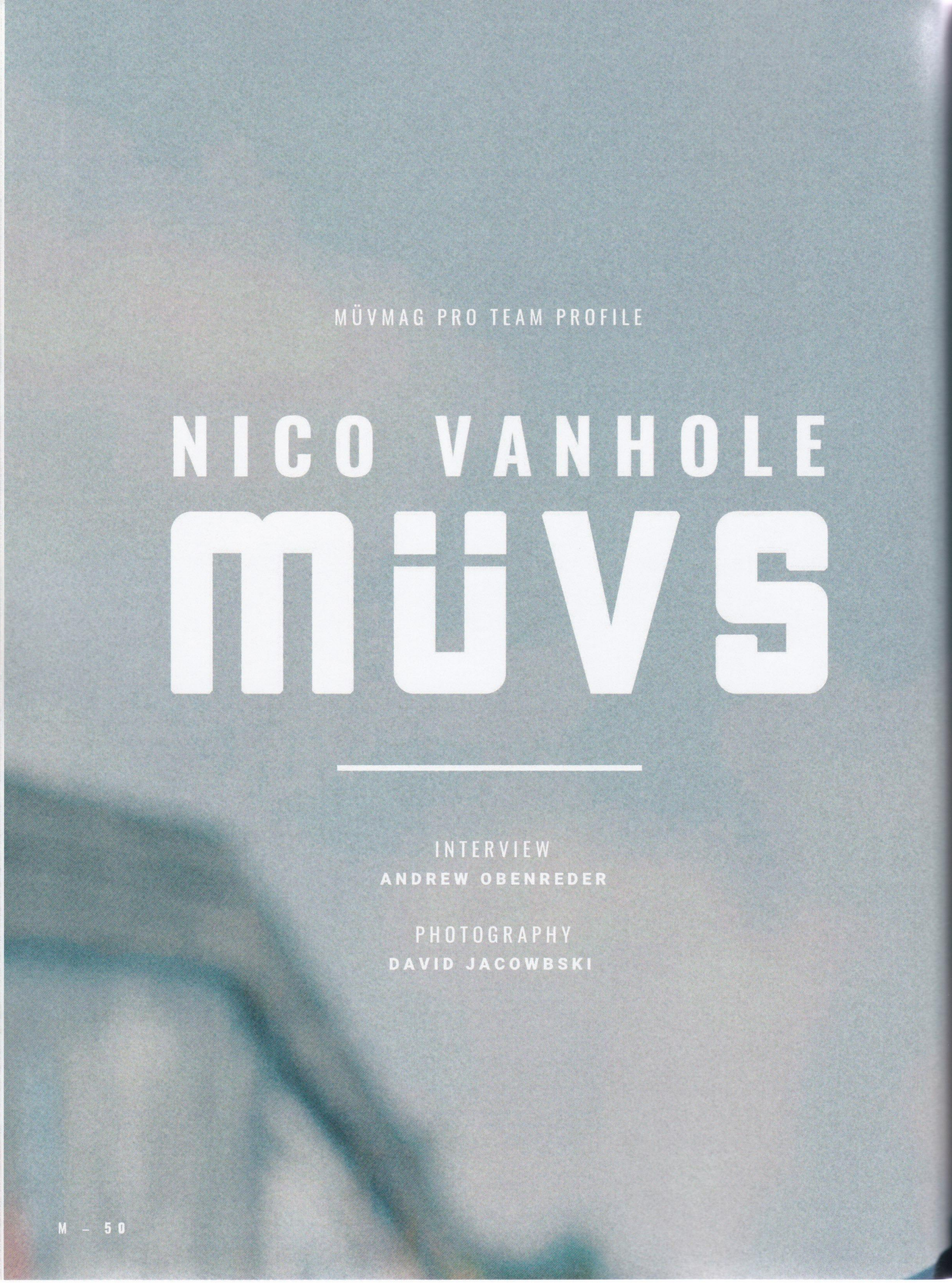
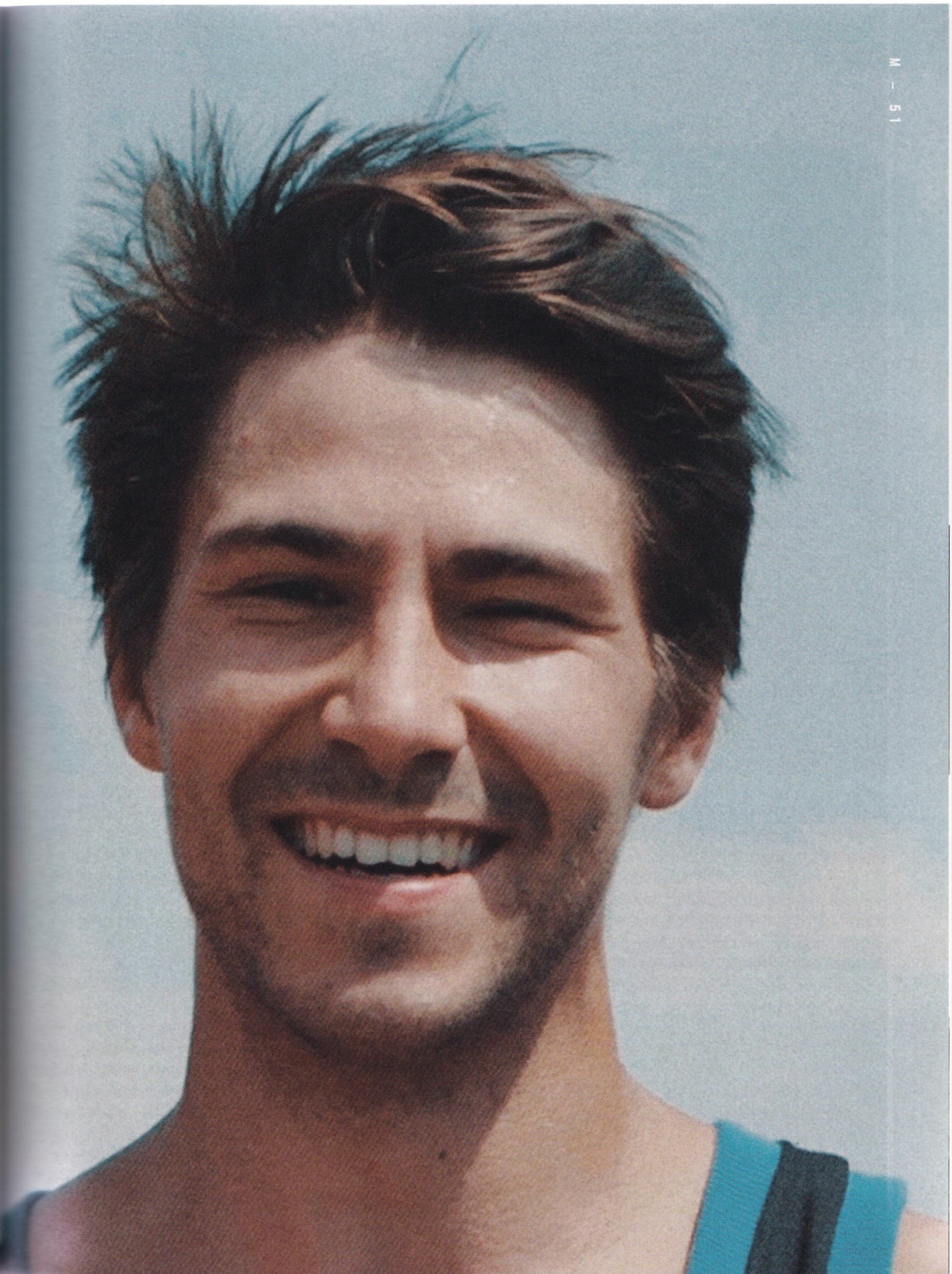


MÜVMAG PRO TEAM PROFILE

NICO VANHOLE MÜVS

INTERVIEW
ANDREW OBENREDER

PHOTOGRAPHY
DAVID JACOWBSKI



Yo Nico! We're glad to have you on the team and I'm excited to sit down and have this chat with you.

First of all, who the fuck is Nico Vanhole?

I'm very happy to be part of this team. So many talented people!

I'm from Leuven, a small city in Belgium known for its beer: Stella Artois. It's a student city so the best training spots are located around the university. It's just a small city, but I love the spots in here. I used to do gymnastics and it was fun, but that was it. Parkour is more a passion to me. It taught me more about life than my education did. Besides teaching and training, I host a kids tv-program called Helden. Me and three friends go out and have a good time building cool stuff and playing outside. The program encourages kids to go out and play and explore more. It's a good fit with what parkour is all about.

Let's time travel back a bit to the beginning of your training. What got you into parkour?

I've started parkour through the Yamakasi movie. I thought they were all stuntmen back then until I saw a video of David Belle training. Later that week we decided to try it ourselves.

At the beginning, it was no more than struggling around and copying techniques from the internet. I've been training for 12 years now. I still know the date where I did my first jumps: on the 19th of February 2006, a cold but sunny Sunday. We had no clue what to do except jumping from high stuff. There were very little tracers in Belgium back then so we had to figure it all out ourselves. Still thankful to Philip Van Ees AKA Chaos who gave us some technical advice through the internet after one year of "training".

Since a few years we are coaching for our local circus school, Cirkus in Beweging, and that became my main job. We've got almost 600 students subscribed to our classes from kids to adults and I'm teaching almost every day.

Since one and a half years we've built our own place in Leuven. It's a cool project, with the parkour gym as one part of a bigger project; Hal 5. Hal 5 has its own bakery, restaurants, a bar, some small organizations, a coffee roaster, and so much more. It's located in an old train depot near the station of Leuven. Next to the parkour gym, there is the Primer Academy. This place was started by one of my best friends and colleagues, Jasper.

He organizes high-quality power sessions for individuals and groups. He also takes care of a group of tracers like myself who are interested in power training to get more explosive and avoid injuries. He's doing an amazing job and his approach motivates me a lot to train harder and get better at parkour.

What does a typical training day look like for you?

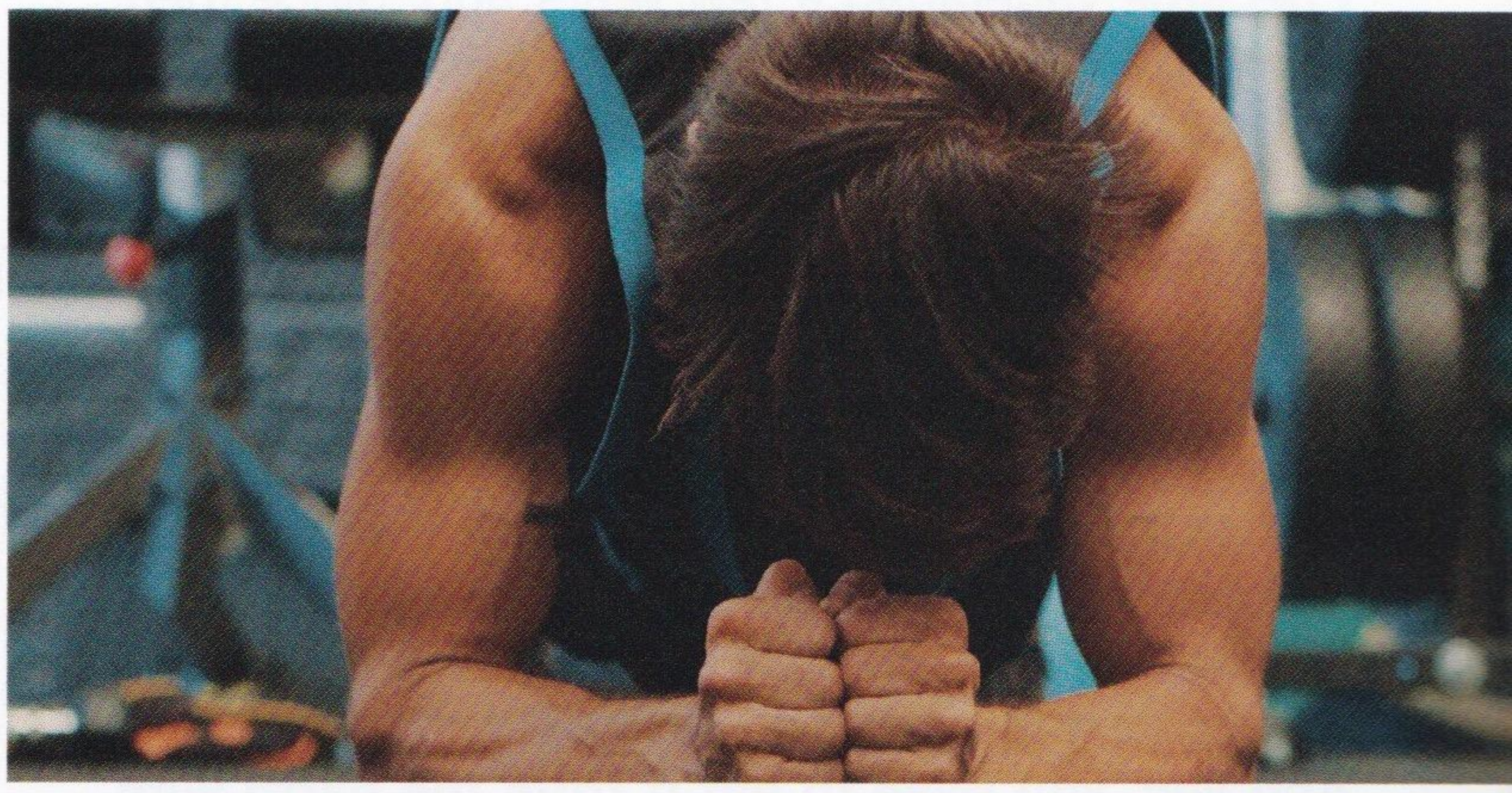
I've started parkour through the Yamakasi movie. Sometimes I don't have any plan what or where to train. Other days I know exactly what I want to work on. I've got a list of certain jumps or combinations to work on, but it's only sometimes that my training is guided by that list. I prefer to train with one or two close friends. I always take time to do a nice warm-up and start with small jumps until I feel that it's time to step up the game. I love that moment; the moment you feel physically and mentally ready to take on any challenge you think you're capable of doing.

I like to work till I start losing energy and I'm satisfied with what I did that day. If I have enough time, I like to do some stretching after training.

Ever since I began training, I've had a love for space and how we can use it creatively, and it seems that you also have a similar desire. For example, your wallspin precisions and use of movements in intricate spaces to change directions. It's just a hunch, but I feel that the architecture of Leuven may have played a role. What led you to develop a style that heavily focused on the creative use of space?

I think that Leuven has some small, nice spots, but there aren't that many really good spots. I think when you visit the same spots a lot, you have to get creative. I've always been interested in training technical, awkward stuff. There are always certain moves that I love doing for a matter of time. For example, that thing where you throw yourself backwards from your hips. Wherever I train, I look for places to try those moves and I'm always looking for variations on new moves. I'm very into foot swings at the moment.

So you mentioned your power sessions with Jasper, what does that training look like, and do you do any other conditioning or cross training in conjunction with parkour?



When I'm training at Jasper's place, I've got my own, individual schedule that I have to complete twice a week. It involves a lot of weighted squatting, deadlifting, bench press, pull-ups, climb-ups, explosive exercises, some stability training (and now I'm looking to my schedule), box jumps, lunges... After every few weeks, we do testing and Jasper rewrites my schedule. I also like to go climbing or running sometimes.

As a movement coach myself, I'm always interested in why others became involved in the educational aspect of parkour. What did it for you?

In Leuven, many people started to get interested in parkour, so we decided to start some classes and teach them in a safe way. At the start, these classes weren't organized that well, but it was all fun and friends! After a few years, the circus school approached us and asked if we wanted to teach for them, so we did. I also did my studies to become a sports teacher. I like the fact that you make people move and that you can motivate them to do so, besides the classes. I believe that teaching can make you a better athlete.

What about food? What typically goes in your body?

I became vegetarian a few years ago. Since then, cooking and food in general have become so much more interesting. I have discovered so many new things since then. I like to eat healthy but it needs to be balanced. I cannot say no to cookies!

Would you rather: eat and drink burger and fries - yes, you do get a solid meal of burger and fries alongside your equivalent meat/potato smoothie, or would you rather keep your vegetarian lifestyle but eat like a cow, grazing on grass and nibbling on soy bits for a week? And yes, you have to eat it from the earth with only your face.

Very difficult one! I prefer eating healthy for most of the time but eating only grass from the ground is too much. I'll go for the fries.

Outside of parkour, like, you know, the rest of life when you're not training, what are you up to?

My main thing besides parkour is drinking coffee, a lot of coffee. I also like reading books, training other fun things like slackline or bouldering, spending time with the girlfriend (also involves a lot of coffee), building things in our parkour gym, taking pictures and urban exploring, biking, traveling...

What do you feel you'd be doing with your life if it wasn't for parkour?

I was always interested in filming so maybe more in that direction instead of teaching. Maybe I would have become a gambling addict with six kids from five different countries, I don't know. I guess that parkour gave me a fun life with lots of variety, so very thankful for that!

I hate to do it, but as someone with a former gymnastics background, what are your thoughts on the FIG situation and their attempts on world domination?

I think we can talk about this for hours, but I'm not sure if I have the right or enough information about this topic. Parkour is nothing that should fall into the hands of people who don't know enough or don't care about our community and culture. I worry about the fact that some people from the parkour community worked closely with FIG and now got out because they don't agree with them. To me, that's a signal that FIG is not doing any good. I also don't understand why gymnastic federations from all over the world took the decision to make parkour part of them. This decision should have been made by our community. It's all about money and politics, I guess. But I'm afraid that they will never care about everything that's behind parkour.

If money was not a factor, and both opportunities presented themselves, would you continue teaching or work as a performance artist on commercial projects and Hollywood films?

I did both (Belgium television, so, almost Hollywood) and loved them both. I hope I have some opportunities for both in the future because they're both really interesting. But if I had to make a choice, I think I would go for teaching. It gives me a lot of satisfaction to make so many people move.

Speaking of work, what career opportunities do you feel will exist within parkour in the future?

I think more cities will invest in parkour playgrounds, so designing the parks would create job opportunities. Clothing design, teaching (maybe also in schools), more jobs in the media sector. I think there are a lot of professional options if you're working hard through parkour, but you'll have to be creative.

If you could travel and train anywhere in the world, where would you go?

Maybe Mexico, the spots and community there look sick and also the nature there looks amazing. I also love burritos and I've never been to Central America.

Who are some of your favorite athletes to watch, and is there anyone who you feel most people don't know about but should?

Damn, so many people! I'll start with Geert and Tom Meeusen, the guys I train with almost every day. They have amazing control and creativity.

So many people from the Danish community, maybe my favorite place to train on earth; Lavdrim Elmazi, Carl Hertz, Thomas Amled, Oliver Thorpe, Julius Hjerno, Elias Zimakoff. All different styles!

Other people that really inspire me: Callum Powell, Andi Woehle, Endijs Miscenko, Nate Weston, Eric Moor, Luis Alkim, Kie Willis, Darryl Stingley, Tim Champion, Cosmin Marius, Max Barker, Joel Eggiman, Alex Schauer and so many more.

Special mention to the teams that are really pushing the sport and community in so many different ways: Storm, Storror, Motus Projects, GUP.

Definitely some incredible movers in there and some that I'm not familiar with, but will definitely have to check them out. You also mention some people that inspire you, so what about inspiration? What all inspires you?

Seeing other people move always gives me inspiration. This could be from people in real life, on Instagram, Youtube, or another amazing documentary. Teaching also leads me to new ideas or variations. Some kids have amazing, crazy ideas. I like to teach with an atmosphere where everything is allowed as long as it's safe to try. Architecture also gives me inspiration. Music is also a good source of inspiration and motivation. Some songs make you want to move.

I feel like we've had enough serious conversation, so I'm just going to hit you with a few random questions - literally whatever pops into the brain first.

If you were like The Wonder Twins (that cartoon where that one guy transforms into a bucket of water), aside from the fact that Zan can only transform into forms of water, what object and what animal would you change into?

I would transform into a leopard. Running that fast should give such an amazing feeling. An object is difficult, maybe a camera.

Rails or ledges?

Rails. They give you so much more satisfaction to land on.

If you could only listen to one song for the rest of your life, what would it be?

Bring It On from Nick Cave And The Bad Seeds, but if you ask me this tomorrow I will probably give you another answer. Maybe tomorrow it's Little Sister from Queens Of The Stone Age. Any good rock song with a cowbell becomes brilliant in my opinion. But now I'm cheating for this question.

What is the most interesting situation that parkour has led you to?

No doubt it was my trip to America with the Storrors, Joel Eggiman, Jesse Peveril, Josh Hill and Ryan Houchin for Chaps On Tour USA. Every day was another adventure. I guess visiting America now might be boring after that experience.

Who would win in a fight: every ant or every human?

I found a page on the BBC website where they compare the weight of all the ants to all humans in the world. Apparently, all humans still weigh 10 times more than all the ants in the world. And weight is important in a fight, so I guess humans. But I would hate it to have seven kilograms of ants crawling on me.

One book that you believe needs to be read and a film that deserves to be watched.

Book: Explore Everything, an amazing book about urban exploring, such a good read!
Movie: Any Alex Honnold documentary (and I haven't seen Free Solo yet).

Ramen or udon?

Ramen, never had udon so I don't know.

What is a good color palette to paint my studio?

Yellow and white. I like bright colours in an interior.

Anything else you'd like to add or say to the world?

We even talked about colour palettes so I guess we talked about all the important things in life. I'm very interested where parkour will leads us to in a few years. Just keep enjoying jumping on and off walls!

KNOW NICO BETTER THROUGH PORTRAITS OF PASSION

A SERIES BY DAVID JACOWBSKI

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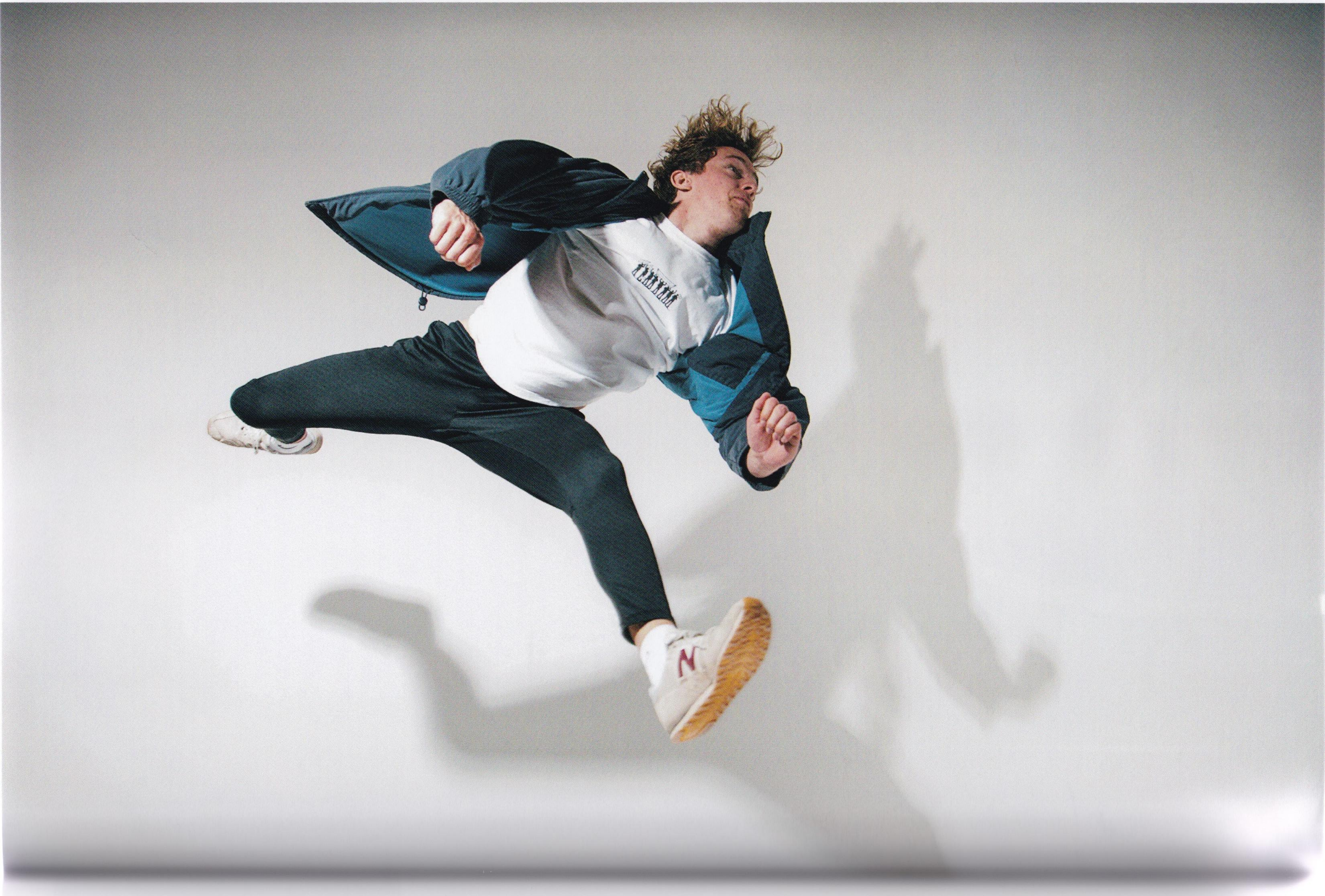
JACOWBSKI.COM

ATHLETE **CHARLIE HAVILL** PHOTOGRAPHY **JACK DODDS** @DODDSFILM @CHARLIEHAVILL



FARAN

IN A ROOM FULL OF MEN

STORY BY ANDREW OBENREDER

WHAT IS IT LIKE BEING A WOMAN IN AN EVENT FULL OF MEN WITHIN A COUNTRY WITH AN OVERLY MASCULINE CULTURE?

Even years after some young boys from the Parisian suburbs ran around the streets of Lisses and Evry, parkour remains a male-dominated discipline, even in age.

It has always seemed odd to me that gymnastics, a discipline with similar physical attributes could be female dominant, yet the female crossover from gymnastics to parkour is few and far between. Is there something inherently different about these two disciplines that attracts one and not the other, or is there something within the parkour community keeping women away?

In every city I have ever visited for parkour, men are the majority. Even in Mexico City, an urban jungle filled with 21.5 million inhabitants and home to one of the largest parkour communities on the planet, there is no exception. While Mexico also has one of the highest numbers of women parkour practitioners, there is still an enormous gap between male and female practitioners.

Mexico also suffers from a long history of machismo or aggressive masculine pride. Male entitlement, superiority complex, sexism, and misogyny are ingrained within Mexico's culture and continue to be reinforced through machismo. Even after decades of fighting, it seems as if there are still places that the feminist movement and ideology of equality haven't been able to break through.

A few years ago, I was invited to Mexico's "Reunion de Traceuses" where I learned about the impact of machismo on parkour's culture in Mexico. Many women were unable to attend the event without being accompanied by a male companion for "their safety" while traveling or training, and because of this, the event openly invited men so that more women were capable of attending. But to my surprise, men didn't jump at the chance to take advantage of the offer, and the event saw the highest number of female attendees alongside an exact 1:1 female to male ratio. Event organizers Skaylet SaLiinaz and Karla Castellanos González used the men's attendance to spread the ideology of equality and equity, making certain that there was space for women to train with women and women to train without the unwanted opinions, advice, and input from men. What I saw was mutual understanding and respect between all.

Over the past three years, I've seen my fair share of male superiority and sexism within parkour in Mexico - from the use of derogatory, sexist language around women (and in general), to unwanted advice and advances while training.

I wanted to know whether machismo had its space within parkour culture and whether it was one of the potential factors in the amount of female participation within the discipline.

So what is it like being a woman in a national event full of men within a country with an overly masculine culture?

For Angelica, it's complicated, and the same macho culture from the outside world seems to exist within her parkour space. "Here in Mexico, they call me a whore because I train around many other men," Angelica says, "and many of them try to flirt with me or make sexual advances, so I need to create my own space and raise my own spirit to work through it."

> “HERE IN MEXICO, THEY CALL ME A WHORE BECAUSE I TRAIN AROUND MANY OTHER MEN.”

Unlike the others, a young mother to one of the jam's participants, Dhalia, feels "safe" within the male-dominated training environment. She believes that "many young people are changing their minds," and with them, the old ideologies of inequality. While she still sees many older people clinging to hateful ideas and actions, she sees hope in the younger generation.

Thamara Monroy, a long-time practitioner from Mexico City, tries to look at both sides and sees something different. "Many women that I know haven't had the chance to be around 50 or 100 men, being able to do what they want while being respected," she says. She believes that through parkour, she has surrounded herself with a particular type of men. "I feel very supported by many of them," she says, and coming to this event, she was "welcomed with an amount of love that I had almost forgotten because I wasn't here." And for the times that she didn't feel respected because a man was giving her unwanted advice or started moving in a space where she was already moving, when they were confronted, she was met with honest apologies.

While some machismo influence within Mexico's parkour scene seems to linger, something within parkour also creates a space where it is more difficult for inequality to exist. But how much machismo is actually present within parkour here and what does it look like?

Thamara sees a lot of it within competitive nature and our desire to thoughtlessly outperform others and ourselves. "I see it in both men and women," she adds, "And we start to say things like, 'I need to be better!' But what does that mean?" The problem is that many here don't have an honest answer, and more than being better, they're looking for notoriety from their peers. "It's a very masculine way to grow for younger boys. It's like you need hit them, and push them, and be kind of mean with them for them to become stronger - and I see a lot of that in parkour," Thamara adds. She doesn't see it as much between people but how we treat ourselves. Even if we're injured or something hurts, we'll decide to push through the pain and continue anyway. "It's the way that we learn," Thamara says, "and I say we because I also feel my masculine side learning that. It's a way for us to give value to ourselves by showing that we are strong." However, strength comes in many different shapes, and she feels that parkour tends to take the most masculine one. "This battle and this confrontation - it's nice to have that because sometimes we use that kind of strength, but there are also more subtle strengths." Like being capable of saying I don't want to do something if my I don't feel it, but there tends to be an opposition to that form of strength that is seen as a weakness, and while she feels that it stems from a cultural dialogue, she hears it a lot within parkour as well. "I hear it when we don't do some jump: 'Yeah, because I'm a pussy...'" And it's words like those coming from our mouths that may turn women away from wanting to take part in the community or at all.

> “ MANY WOMEN THAT I KNOW HAVEN'T HAD THE CHANCE TO BE AROUND 50 OR 100 MEN, BEING ABLE TO DO WHAT THEY WANT WHILE BEING RESPECTED. ”

After talking with many women within the jam space, one thing seemed to be certain: men providing unwanted advice was constant. "Many men here try to help or offer advice without asking," says Herme Castro, a young practitioner from Mexico City. "Many of them also think that because I'm a girl, I'm not capable of doing something, which is why they come to help in the first place," she adds. Just as men want the space to work through things, women want the same, and this issue isn't an issue that is exclusive to women, but one seen throughout our practice. If you are someone who enjoys sharing knowledge or helping others, instead of just providing them with what you believe they need, why not ask if they're interested in your help? By asking, not only are you making an effort to honestly connect with an individual as an equal, but you are also showing them and the space you share the respect they deserve.

"It's not black and white," Thamara says, feeling that too much weight is given to one perspective, as the opposing side and everything in between is undervalued or ignored entirely. Just because the issues exist doesn't mean that every man is at fault. There are men doing beautiful things, not just for parkour but in general, and it's important that those things are recognized. And once they are, then what? What needs to change for the current and future women of parkour to create a more conducive environment for them?

For Herme, it's important that women step up to inspire other women to participate, but also to empower women who are already training through exhibitions, tutorials, and free classes. While Dhalia hasn't experienced or seen the same struggles within parkour, she has in everyday life and believes that women need to learn to say no. "The time is now," she says, "for us, it was forbidden" as Mexico's conservative and macho culture didn't allow the space for that no to exist. And now? Dhalia says, "We are learning to say no." As for Thamara, she has heard the question "What do you girls need to feel better here?" far too many times over the years. "It's not like telling you to not say bad words in front of me," she says, and for her, that's like an incomplete recipe. "I believe the feminine side of parkour has a lot to give to the masculine side," Thamara adds, "If we take these masculine and feminine energies, what can we create from them? We already see a lot of the masculine side here, but the feminine side is missing." And this idea is something that she intends to work on. "Come back in a year, and you'll see," she says half-jokingly with a big smile on her face.

While Thamara is out bringing the change she wants to see within the world, we can begin to learn to be honest with ourselves and the people around us, learn to respect our environment and work towards the conscious understanding that we're all human. Maybe then, you'll see more women coming out to play, and parkour can become the all-inclusive club we imagine it to be.

> “I BELIEVE THE FEMININE SIDE OF PARKOUR HAS A LOT TO GIVE TO THE MASCULINE SIDE.”

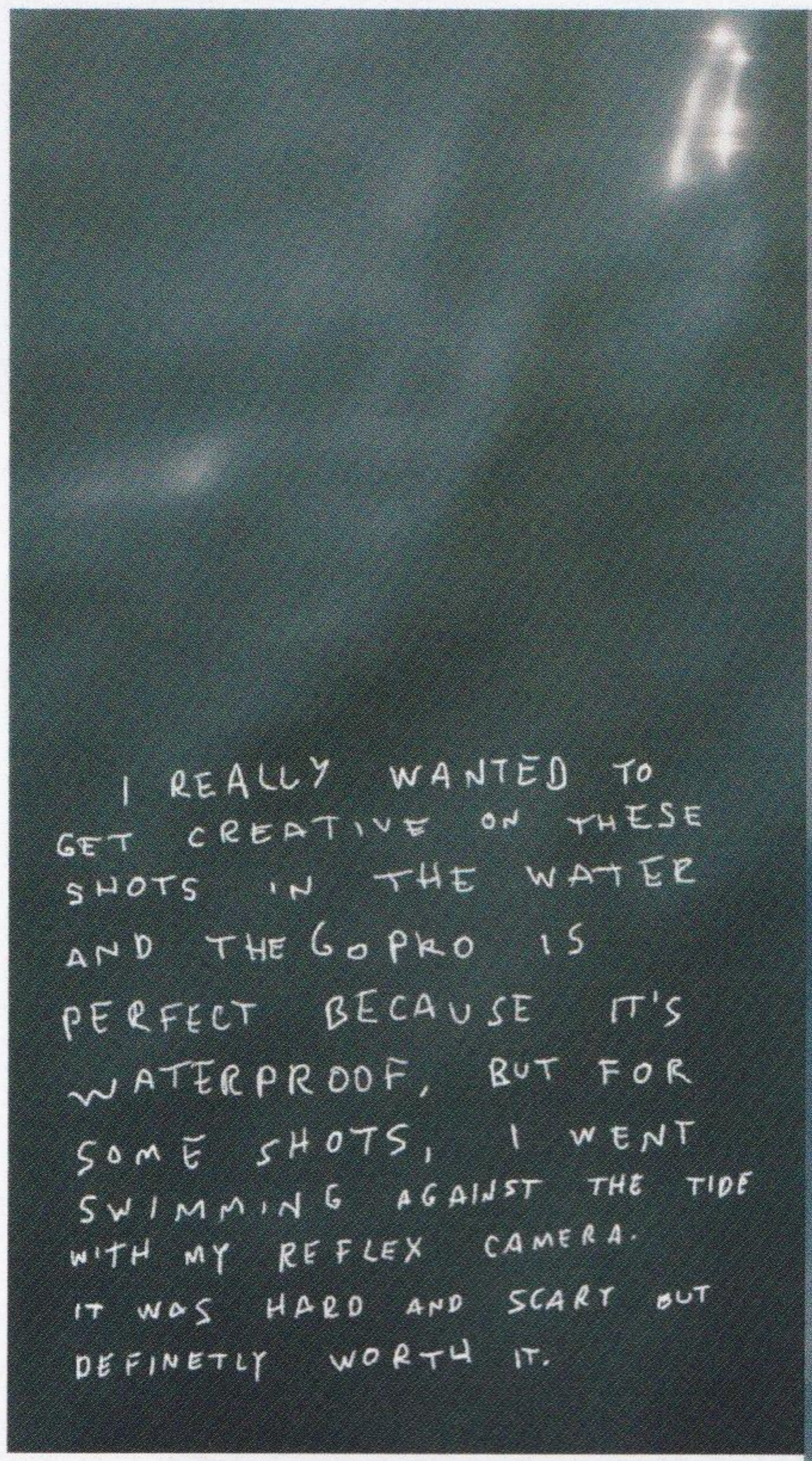
FOLLOW @THAMSTASH @ANDREWMUVS @ANDREWOBENREDER

MEMORIES FROM THE CAMP

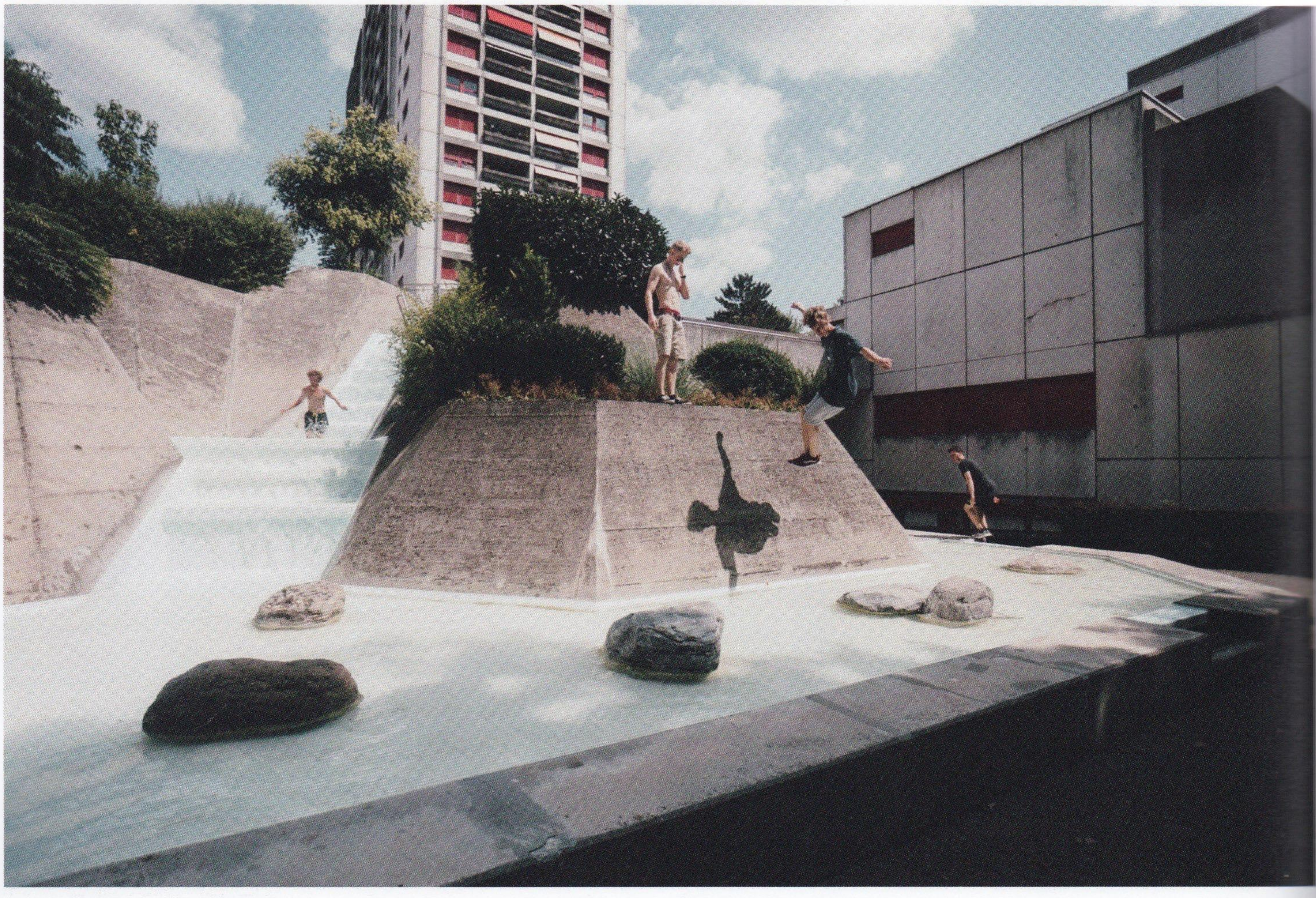
BY JULIEN BLANC

WE HAD ONE COMPLAINT THIS YEAR. THE COURT GUY CAME AND TOLD US THAT TWO PEOPLE HAD SEX BY THE POOL IN THE NIGHT AND LITERALLY IN FRONT OF THE RECEPTION.

THIS IS NOT OKAY,
BUT WE STILL DON'T KNOW IF
IT WAS PEOPLE FROM OUR GROUP.



I REALLY WANTED TO GET CREATIVE ON THESE SHOTS IN THE WATER AND THE GOPRO IS PERFECT BECAUSE IT'S WATERPROOF, BUT FOR SOME SHOTS, I WENT SWIMMING AGAINST THE TIDE WITH MY REFLEX CAMERA. IT WAS HARD AND SCARY BUT DEFINETLY WORTH IT.



A FRIEND TOLD ME THAT IT WOULD BE SICK IF I DID A WALL SIDEFLIP PRE ONTO A ROCK IN A FOUNTAIN. MY FIRST REACTION: NO CHANCE. BUT AFTER A COUPLE HOURS AT THE SPOT, I FINALLY CAME BACK TO HIS IDEA AND DECIDED TO GIVE IT A TRY.

I LANDED IT ON MY FIRST TRY WITHOUT ANY PROBLEM AND DID IT SEVERAL MORE TIMES TO GET A GOOD SHOT.

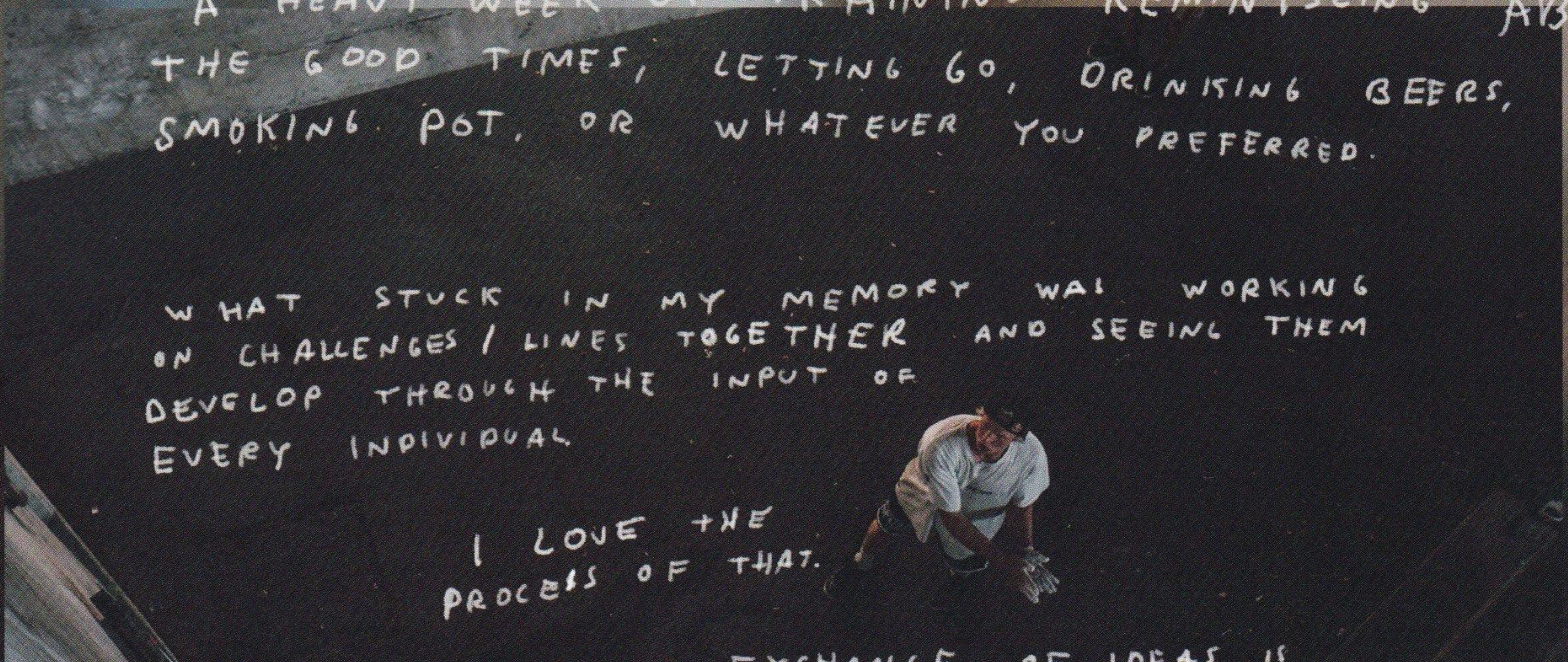
IT WAS A PRETTY MENTAL CHALLENGE.

WE SPENT THE LAST NIGHT TOGETHER AFTER A HEAVY WEEK OF TRAINING REMINISCING ABOUT THE GOOD TIMES, LETTING GO, DRINKING BEERS, SMOKING POT, OR WHATEVER YOU PREFERRED.

WHAT STUCK IN MY MEMORY WAS WORKING ON CHALLENGES / LINES TOGETHER AND SEEING THEM DEVELOP THROUGH THE INPUT OF EVERY INDIVIDUAL

I LOVE THE PROCESS OF THAT.

I THINK THE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS IS WHAT MAKES PARKOUR SPECIAL FOR ME ANYWAY.



DENIZ ARI BROUGHT A REALLY STRONG LASER ONE NIGHT AND KAMIL WAS THE MOST IMPRESSED OF ALL. BUT WE ALL LOVED THE LASER SHOWS WHICH WERE DONE BY WHOEVER GOT THEIR HANDS ON IT.

AT ONE POINT, WE ALL LAID ON THE GROUND AND ENJOYED POINTING IT TOWARD THE STARS AND UNDER A TREE AS THE LEAVES MOVED IN EVERY DIRECTION.

IN THE END, KAMIL GOT THE LASER AS A PRESENT.

20 PEOPLE SAT AROUND JAMMING AS WE LISTENED TO BARTJE ON GUITAR AND HIS GIRLFRIEND WITH HER BEATUIFUL COUNTRY VOICE WHILE MOST OF US TRIED TO WORK BEATS INTO THEIR SONG. I'LL NEVER FORGET THAT PIECE OF CONNECTION.

PHOTOS BY:
JULIEN BLANC
WWW.JULIENBLANC.FR
@JULIENB.VISUALS

STORIES BY:
CHRISTIAN HARMAT
ENDJIS MISCENKO
CARYL CORDT-MOLLER
JULIEN BLANC

ATHLETE – MAURICIO LOPEZ PHOTOS – ANDREW OBENREDER

@MAUWOW

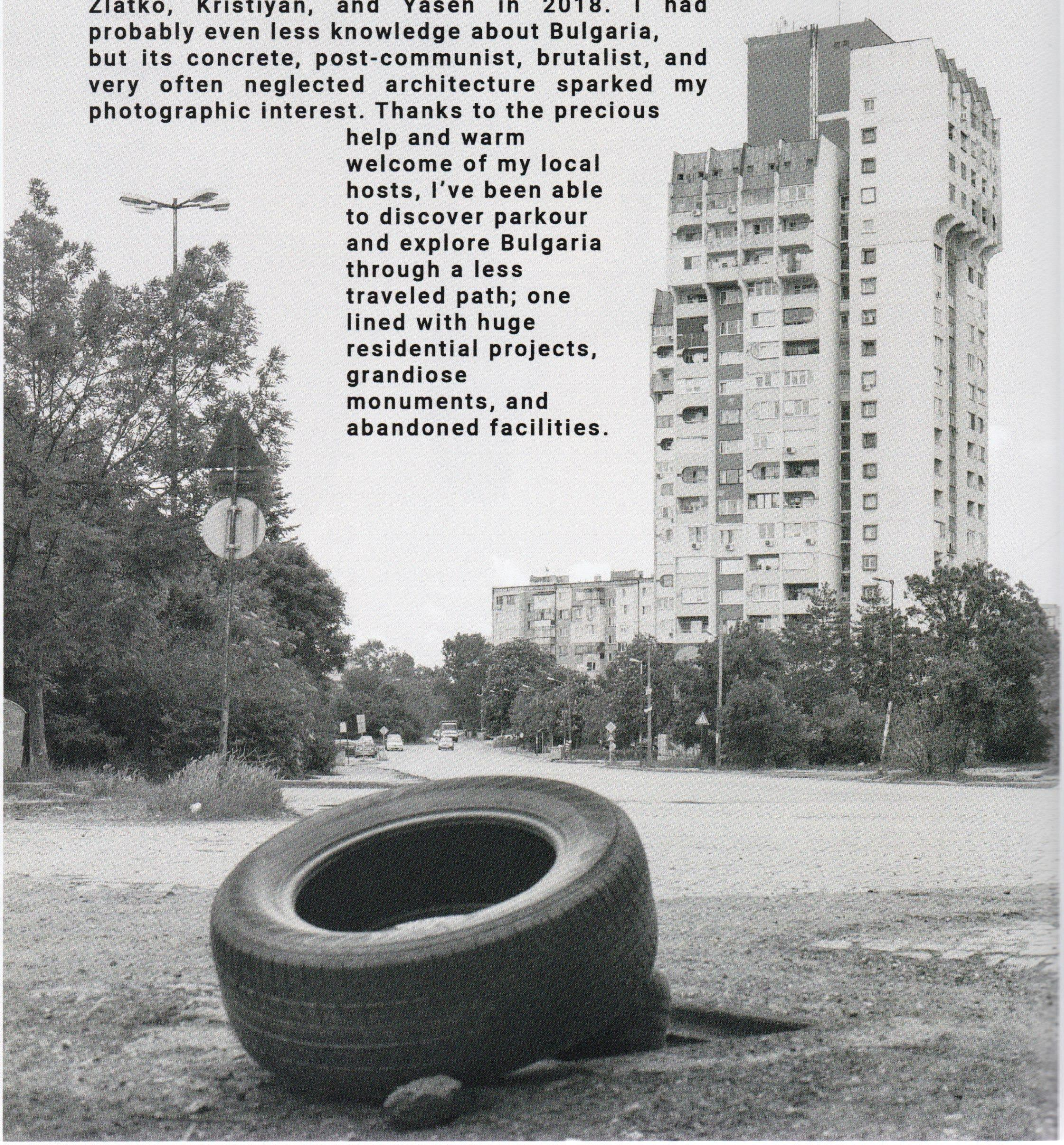
@ANDREWOBENREDER

EXPLORING BULGARIA THROUGH PARKOUR & ARCHITECTURE

BY FABIEN SCOTTI

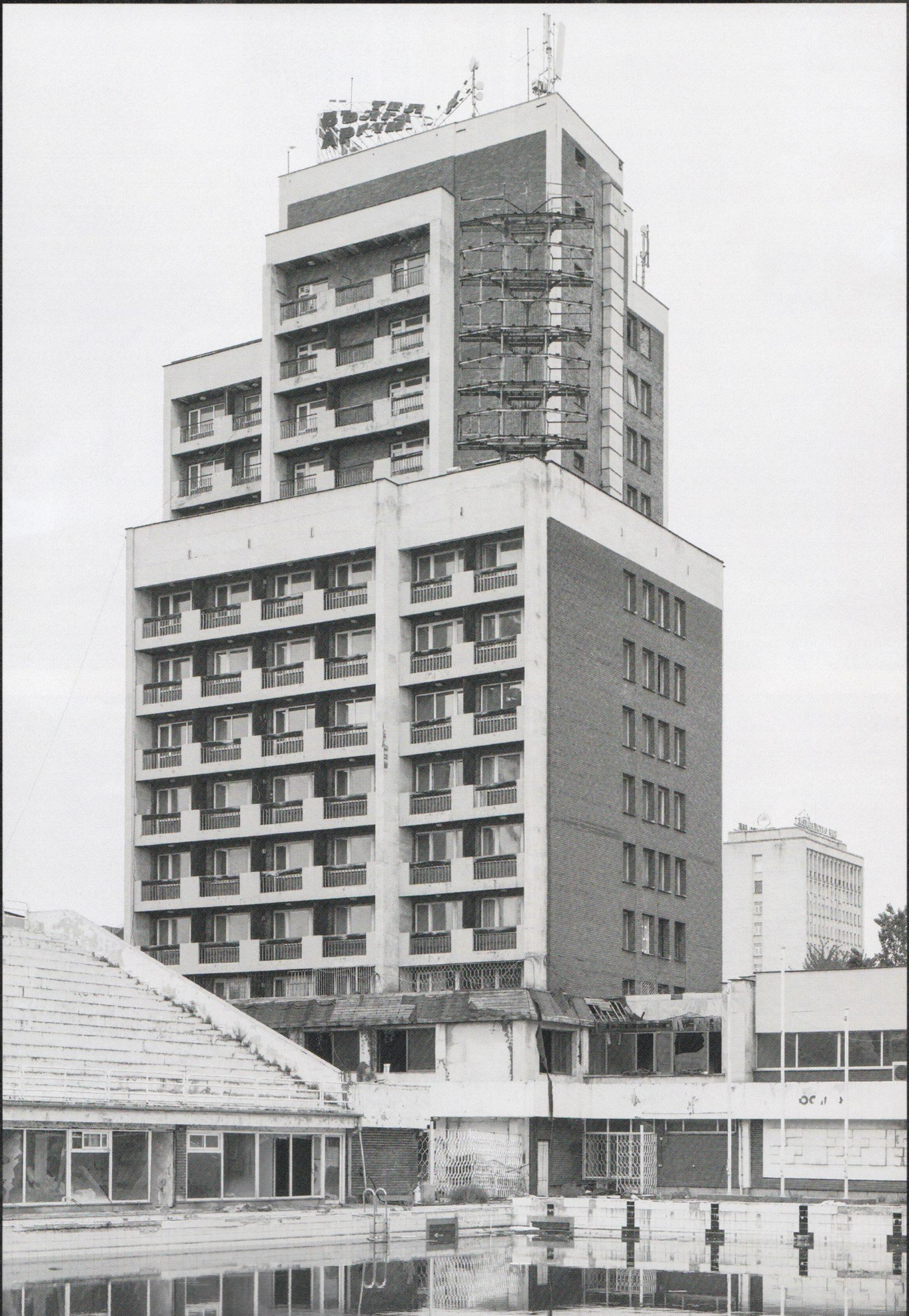
For the past 15 years, skateboarding and photography have been great reasons to visit distant places and meet people with very diverse cultural backgrounds. Skate photography, led me to explore the outskirts of Beijing, Rome, and Barcelona but allowed me to escape the main sightseeing areas and get somewhat close to what we regard as “true” or “authentic” local life. It also gave me a unique opportunity to meet people of different ages and lifestyles, with a shared passion for urban exploration, athletic practices and the art of movement.

As a skateboarding photographer, I knew very little about parkour culture before meeting Zlatko, Kristiyan, and Yasen in 2018. I had probably even less knowledge about Bulgaria, but its concrete, post-communist, brutalist, and very often neglected architecture sparked my photographic interest. Thanks to the precious help and warm welcome of my local hosts, I’ve been able to discover parkour and explore Bulgaria through a less traveled path; one lined with huge residential projects, grandiose monuments, and abandoned facilities.



НА СЪВЕТСКАТА АРМИЯ
ОСВОБОДИТЕЛКА
ОТ ПРИЗНАТЕЛНИЯ
БЪЛГАРСКИ НАРОД

филип



ЕДИНСТВО
ТВОРЧЕСТВО
КРАСОТА
UNITY
CREATIVITY
BEAUTY

ЕДИНСТВО
ТВОРЧЕСТВО
КРАСОТА
UNITY
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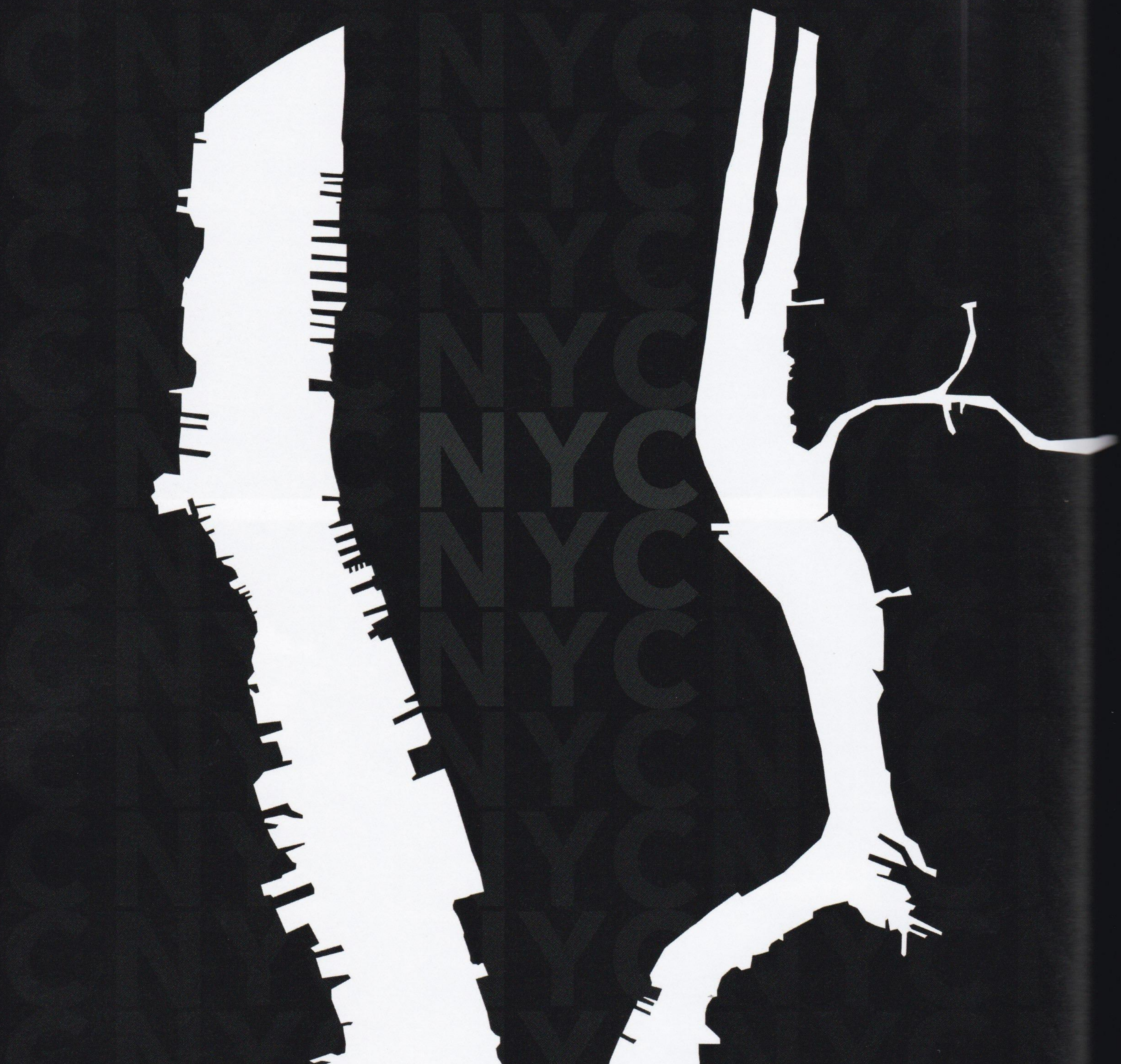
BEAUTY

FOLLOW @F_SCOTTI OR VISIT FABIENSCOTTI.COM FOR MORE.

FOLLOW @ILKOILLILIEV @ZLATKOGOLDRUM @KRISTIYAN59 @APTRICKS @KIRIL_HANDSTANDS TO SEE MORE FROM THE ATHLETES INVOLVED.


NYC
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WELCOME TO

NEW YORK

New York City is the American urban jungle. It is a metropolitan melting pot filled with an eclectic melange of the world's people, languages, food, and culture. NYC is home to one of the earliest and largest parkour communities within the United States, and along with a decently tight community, the city provides a ton of gritty, urban play space.

DESIGN: YARON ERKIN

FULL PRINTED CITY GUIDES AVAILABLE SOON AT SHOP.MUVMAG.COM

NEED TO KNOW

CURRENCY

US Dollars ($)

LANGUAGE

English, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Italian, French Creole, French, Yiddish, Korean, Polish, and Bengali.

800 languages total.

DT/FB DAILY TRACEUR/FREERUNNER BUDGET

$20/Day

DMB DAILY MUGGLE BUDGET

Up to $100/Day

HOUSING

Yes (Limited)

HOUSING DMB

Up to $30-100+/Night

TRANSPORT

Metro - $.275/Ride ($1 new card fee)
7-Day Unlimited Metro - $32
30-Day Unlimited Metro - $121

CHEAP EATS

2 Bros Pizza, Prince Street Pizza, any Halal cart, Veggie Castle II, Bombay's, Taqueria Izucar, Don Pepe Tortas Y Jugos, Prosperity Dumpling, Wah Fung, Mamoun's Falafel, Punjabi Grocery & Deli, Baohaus, Banh Mi Saigon, Trader Joe's, any hood bodega/deli.

MAIN GROUPS

The Movement Creative
Urban Vanguard
The Unknown Project
The Venture Co.

GYMS

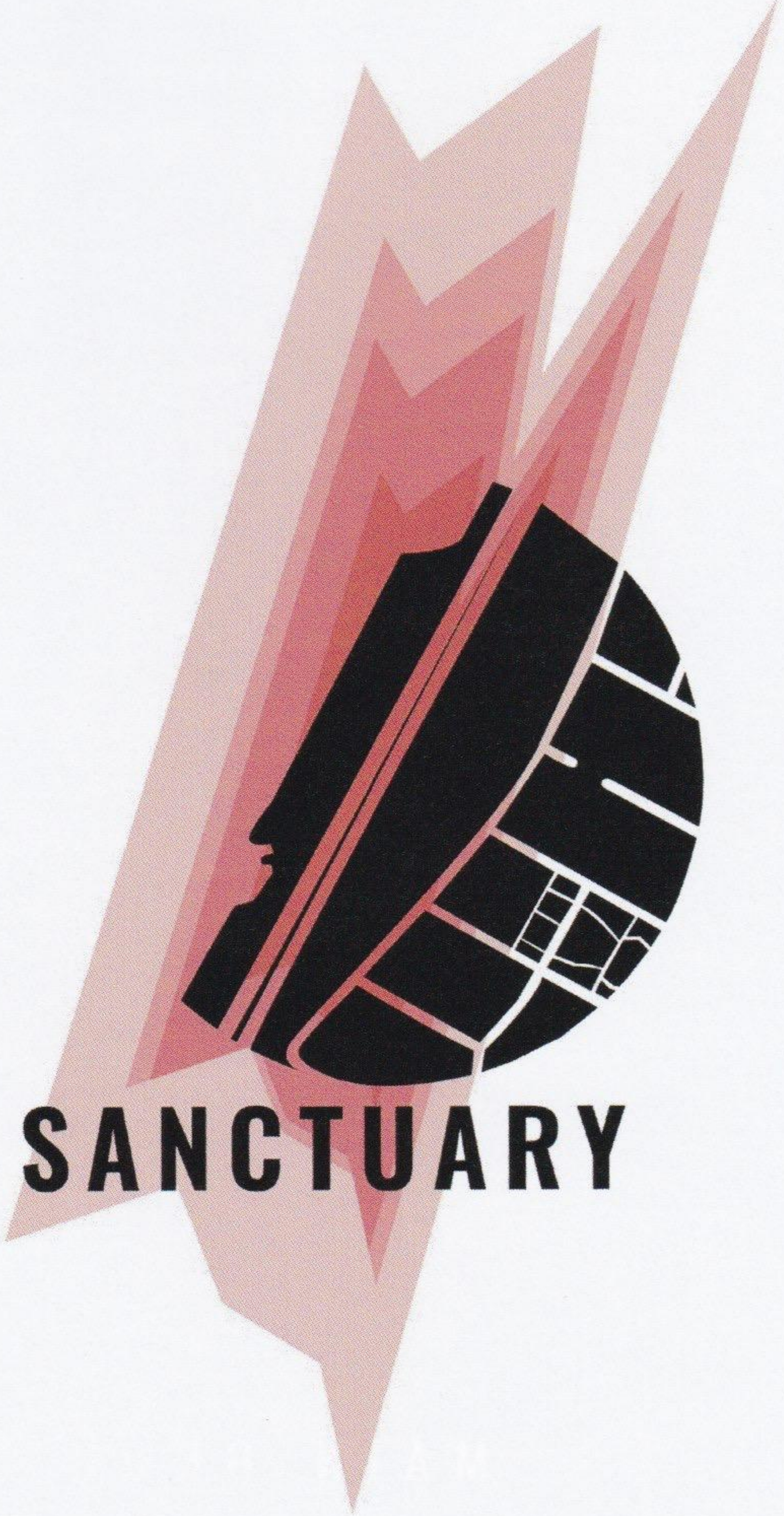
The Brooklyn Zoo

HAPPENINGS

PKNY (National Jam)
Workshops
Regular training
Conditioning

CONTACTS

Jesse Danger
Mike Araujo
Sha Mualimm-Ak
Bryce Clarke
Laine Cammarata
Yaron Erkin

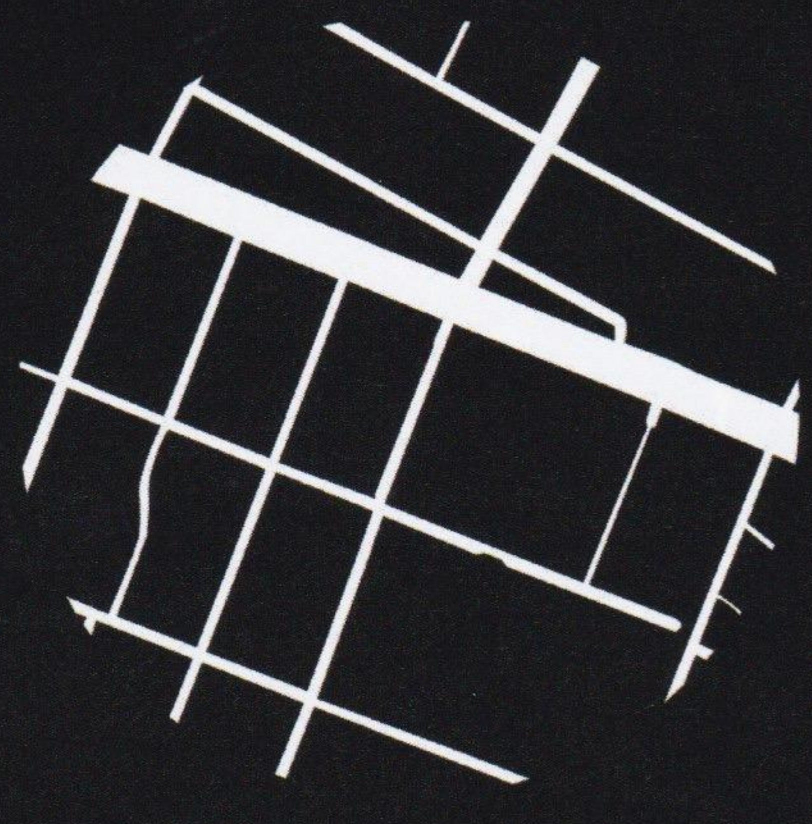


SANCTUARY

40°46'35.6"N 73°59'29.5"W

40°46'35.6"N 73°59'29.5"W

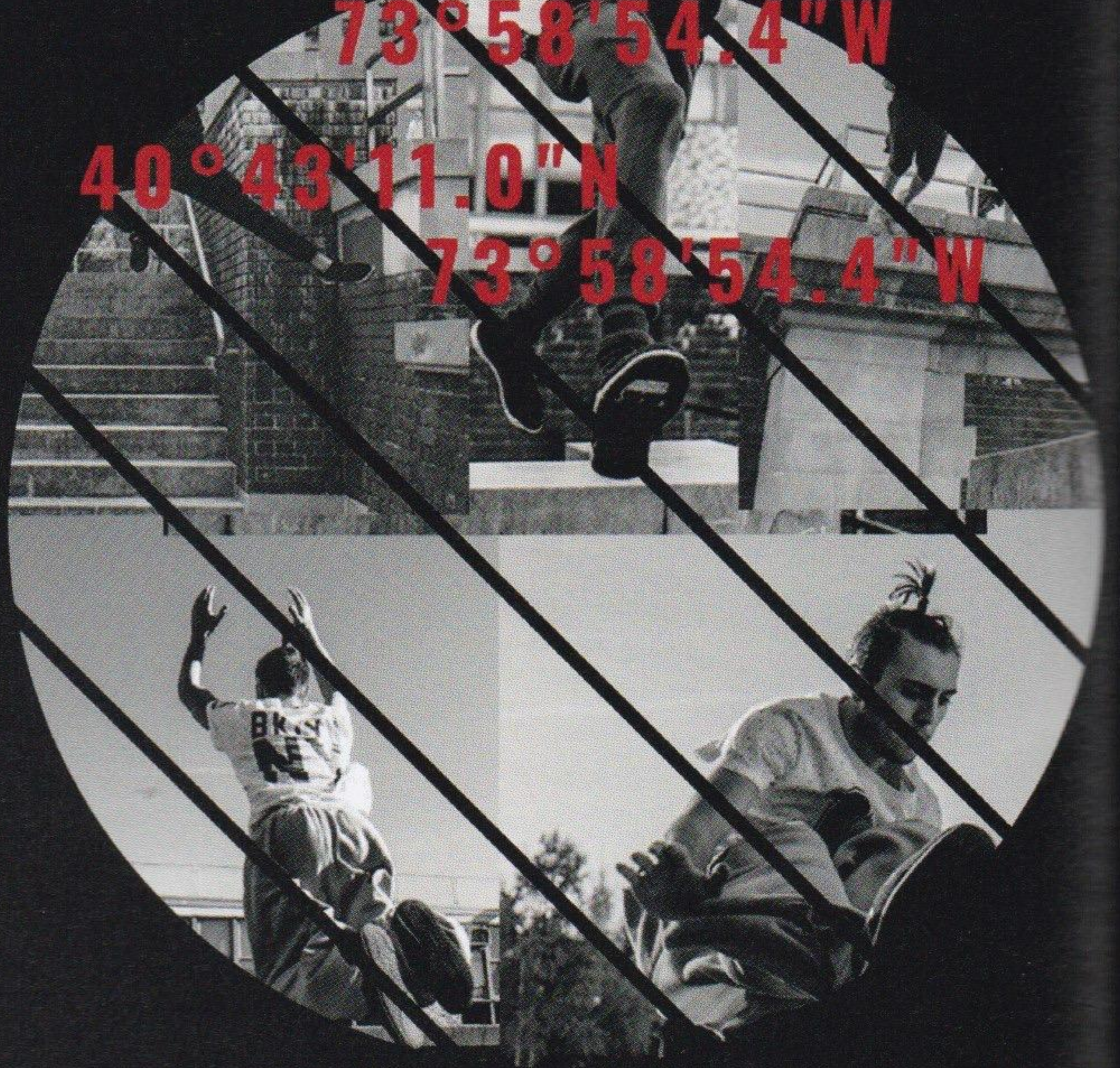
TAKE THE
METRO TO
76 STREET
BROADWAY



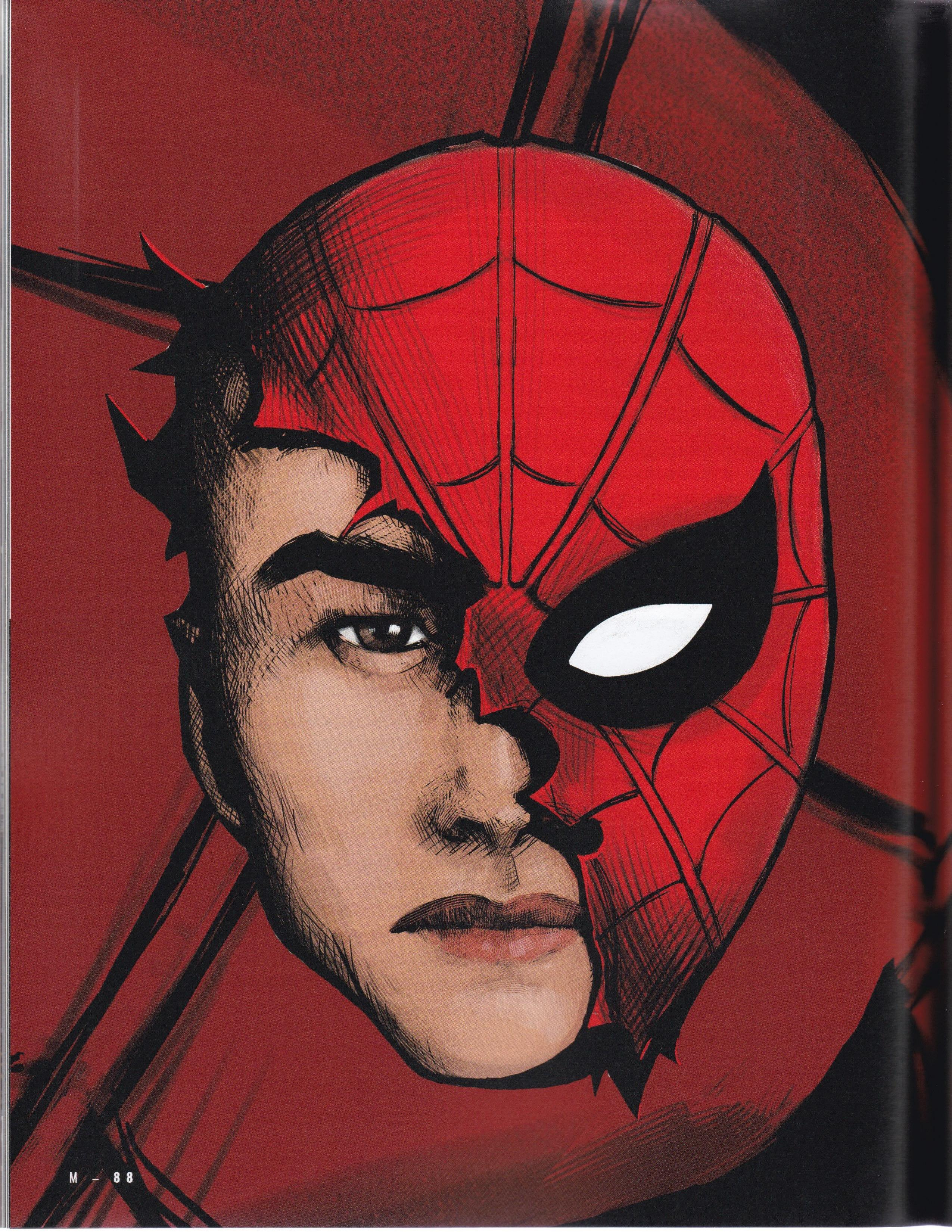
HAMFISH

40°43'11.0"N
73°58'54.4"W

40°43'11.0"N
73°58'54.4"W



TAKE THE
METRO TO
ESSEX
STREET



STORY BY ANDREW OBENREDER
COVER ART BY BRYAN AUSTIN
SKETCHES BY ANDREW OBENREDER

MARVIN ROSS is SPIDER-MAN

So many people within parkour and around the world are fans of Spider-Man. Forget Toby McGuire, Andrew Garfield, and Tom Holland - you basically get to be the closest thing to the real thing. What is it like being Spider-Man?

Well, I don't consider my self Spider-Man, that's Tom all day! But getting the chance to be the double for that movie was beyond crazy, and I still don't believe it. When you put the suit on, you can't help but become him! You stand straight up, and every move becomes a Spidey move. You began talking in his witty manner, and until that suit comes off, every move and thought is done as Spidey.

How has your parkour training been applicable to the role?

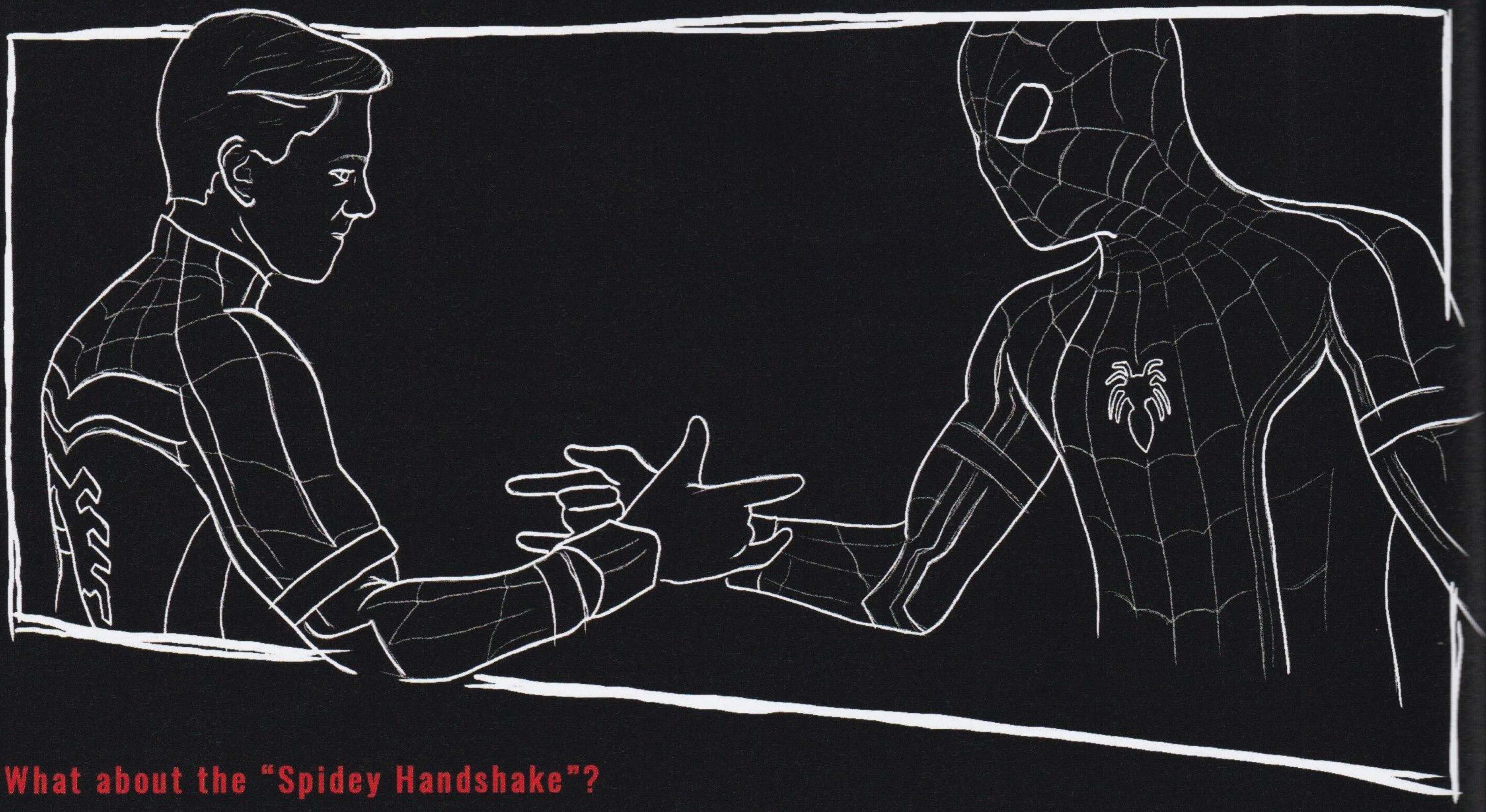
My parkour training not only helped me for the role but also saved me on a stunt that didn't go all the way right. I was supposed to do a backflip pre onto a small surface, and because of the way the suit is made and the angle that I was coming down on, I slipped but was able to come out of it with no injuries because of the air awareness I had gained through years of parkour.

What happens in between Marvin and the Spidey suit?

Prepping my self for the Spidey suit was running every day about three miles with an elevation mask on. Then training the fights as well as flips in about three layers of clothing, and a jacket over that so I could get used to not being able to move as freely as I would normally. I would also run up and down the different sets while other shots were being done to keep myself in shape for the suit.

What is the Spidey suit like in real life?

It’s about 6 layers: You have your dancer's belt, briefs, under armor, muscle suit, cooling suit, and then the actual suit. The helmet has a metal shell around your entire head. The cooling suit that's underneath everything has a line coming from it that they pump water into to cool you down because of all the layers and because the Georgia heat gets dangerously hot. It also takes 4 people to put it on and baby powder is involved. It's a tight suit.

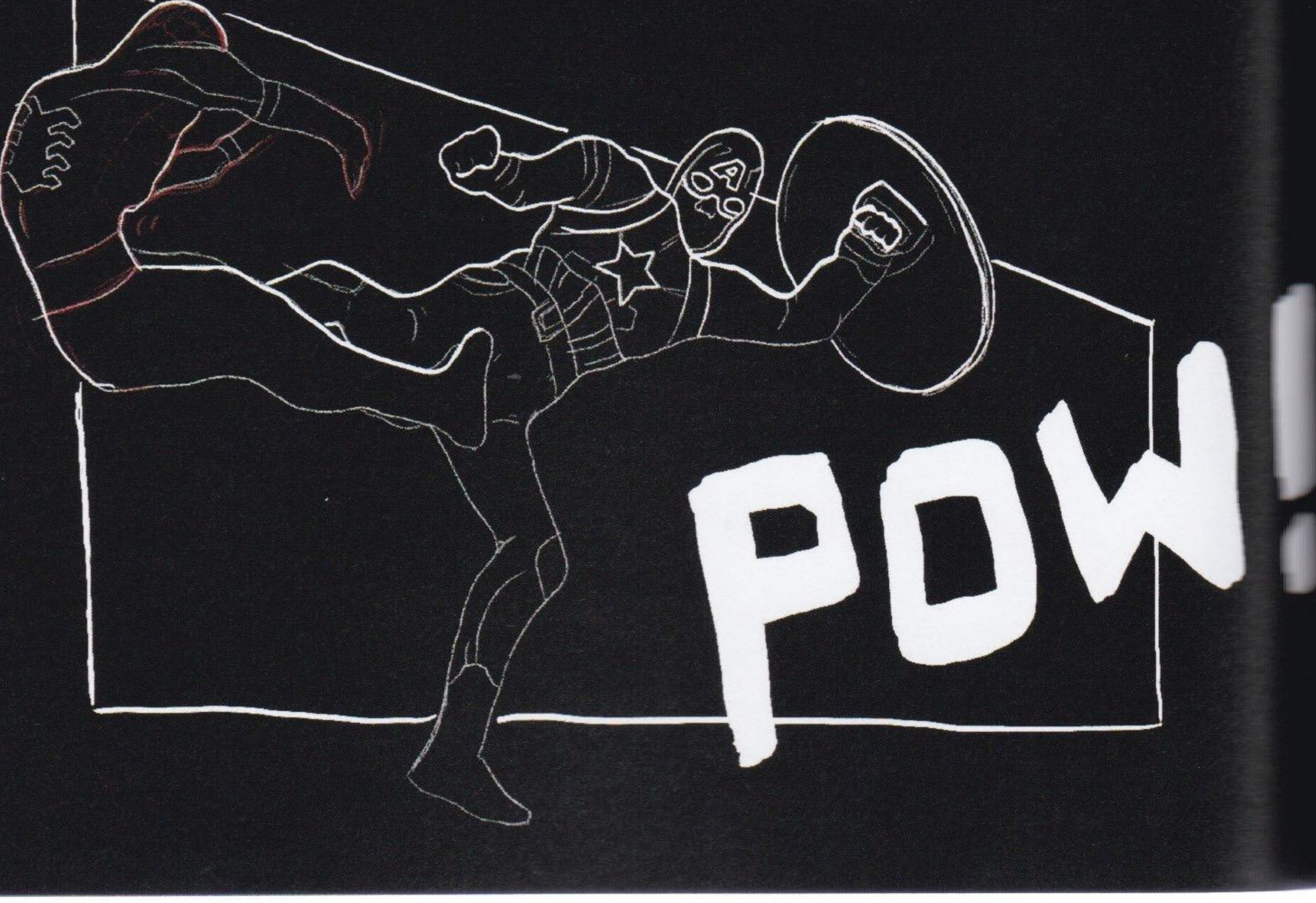


What about the “Spidey Handshake”?

The Spidey Handshake was just something that Tom and I came up with one day while we were waiting to be called to set. We wouldn’t do it all the time but definitely will never forget it.

What happens when you don’t agree with Captain America?

(Laughs) When you don’t agree with Captain America, he shows you that he doesn’t agree with you either. He does what Cap does best: fight and also teach you a lesson at the same time.



What advice would you give to the aspiring stunt man who wants to someday work on projects such as these?

The advice that I would give to anyone trying to get into the stunt industry is practice your craft. Because it's not what you can do, it's can you do it as many times as they need in the same spot while not being able to see or move as freely as you would like? It's not as simple as flip from here to here, or fall here and land here. There are so many more variables that you have to be aware of and also know how to change something on the fly and be comfortable with it and sell it to the camera. The last tip would be, it's not all about the flips. I can count the amount of jobs where I had to flip on one hand, and I've been doing this for about six years now. Learn how to fall, fight, and act! At the end of the day you are a stunt PERFORMER and being able to act is a huge part of that.

Speaking of projects, have anything else in the works?

Yes, I'm working on a couple different things right, but I'm not allowed to talk about them. I really wish I could but I've got a lot of projects coming out this year and I can't wait for everyone to see!

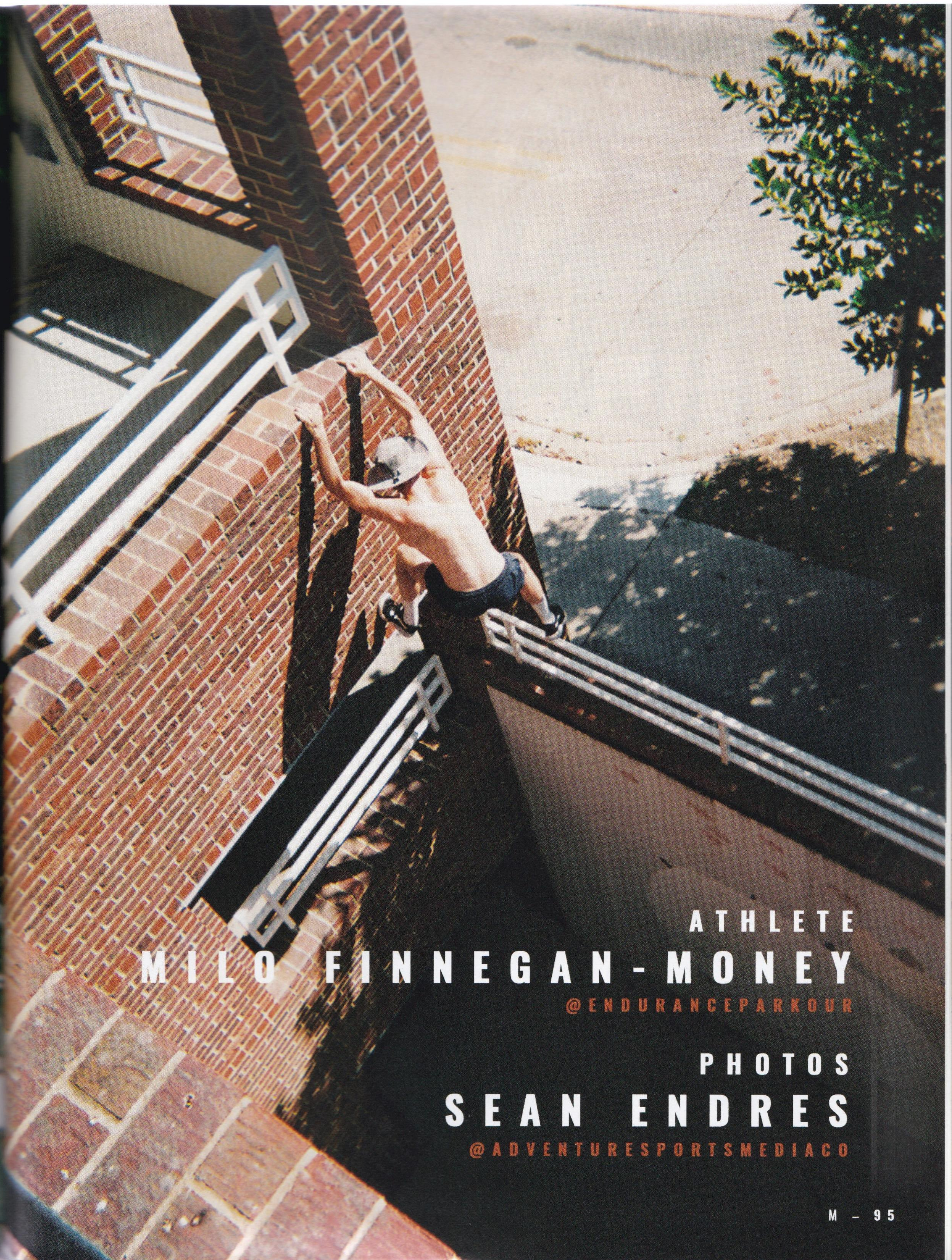
In the meantime, go watch Marvin kick ass in Captain America: Civil War, Guardians of the Galaxy Vol.2, Baby Driver, Spider-Man: Homecoming, and Avengers: Infinity War.

INSTAGRAM MARVIN ROSS @_MARVINROSS
ANDREW OBENREDER @ANDREWMUVS

SEE MORE ON MARVINROSS.COM

AT SOME POINT IN MY LIFE I REALIZED
NOT EVERY CHALLENGE COMES DOWN TO A SINGLE MOMENT
WHERE YOU STAND ON THE PRECIPICE AND SAY “I HAVE TO JUMP NOW”
THOSE COME ALONG MAYBE ONCE EVERY DECADE
MOST OF LIFE IS A SLOG - A GRIND - THIS HARD ENDLESS THING
THE GOALS ARE FAR AWAY AND THEY DON’T HAPPEN IN A MOMENT
THEY HAPPEN IN A SERIES OF CHOICES
THIS IS THE PLACE I WANT TO START
THIS IS A WAY OF PREPARING MY MIND AND BODY FOR THE THINGS I WANT TO DO
TO TRANSFORM MYSELF INTO THE BEST VERSION OF ME

NO PARKING
NO PARKING ANY TIME



ATHLETE

MILO FINNEGAN-MONEY

@ENDURANCEPARKOUR

PHOTOS

SEAN ENDRES

@ADVENTURESPORTSMEDIACO

SHOTS FIRED!!!

DEAR COMMUNITY,

Let's get scientific here: biomechanics. End of science, because this no hands, jank-ass, let's-ruin-our-knees-for-no-unnecesary-hand-touching landing bullshit is lacking that.

In all seriousness, who was the bright mind that chucked the idea of properly controlled body mechanics over the Manpower gap and decided that when your hands touch the ground, it doesn't count? It's hard to say it's worth trading your back and patellar tendons in for some street cred.

The closest parallel we can draw is the precision stick, but even then, we're mostly on the same page on what a good stick looks like, not some noodle-armed, spine-twisting, patella-snapping, scoliosis-for-time dance just so your hands don't touch the ground simply because somebody declared that was the standard.

Now, let's get back to the biomechanics and some sound reasoning against this no hands touching nonsense.

While the knee is the largest joint in the human body, it is a hinge joint composed of small elements not capable of carrying heavy loads alone. Door hinges can only take so much force in a given direction, and if you were to slam a door in the opposing direction, the hinge would snap, just like your shit. Because of the lack of proper glute and hamstring activation accompanied by almost every "no hands" landing, too much force is directed on the most delicate region of the legs. This is what your lower posterior chain is for. The gluteus maximus is the largest muscle in the human body, followed by the hamstrings and quadriceps. Use that shit.

Rounded posture on landing is also a killer. The same way that you shouldn't be rolling with a rounded spine, as it places to much load on a direct segment of your spinal column, you shouldn't be landing with that posture either. Nobody is trying to live that hunchback, ruptured disc, J-curve Spine Gang life.

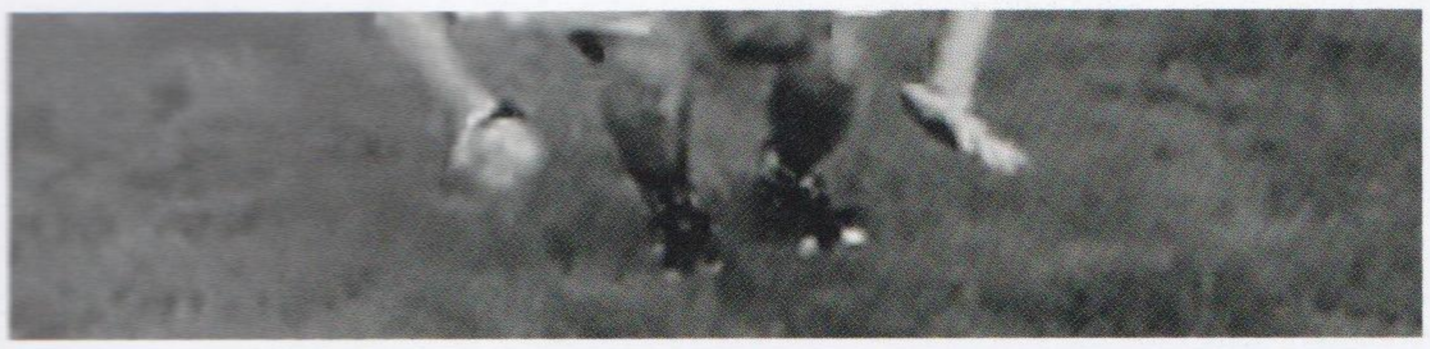
Those chiropractic cash cows make it difficult to effectively link movements due to the awkwardly low body positioning and the immense effort needed to execute said movement while keeping your arms raised and your hands from touching anything within the surrounding region. You aren't Bob Reese, and how this man is capable of taking those wack landings and effectively linking and transforming them into some wild shit is beyond me. Props Bob.

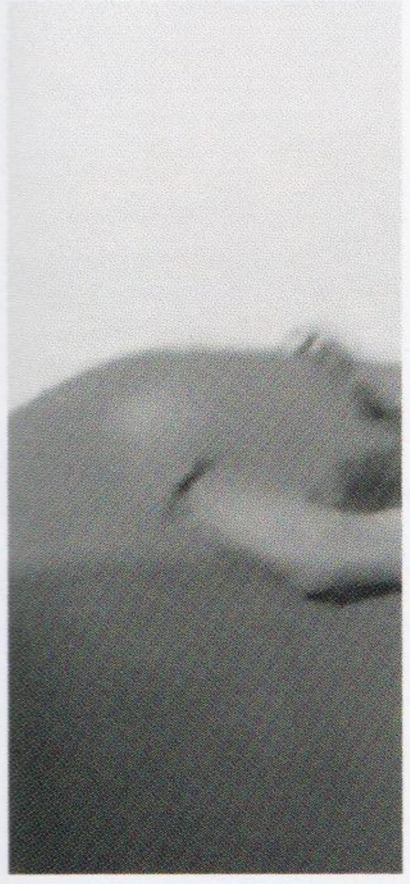
And you know who has better tech than you? Monkeys. You know what they do? Not this.

But aside from all the sound reasoning presented, THAT SHIT STUPID.

So please, next time you consider what fate your involvement in the J-curve Spine Gang may bring to you, your family, or future generations of parkour...don't.

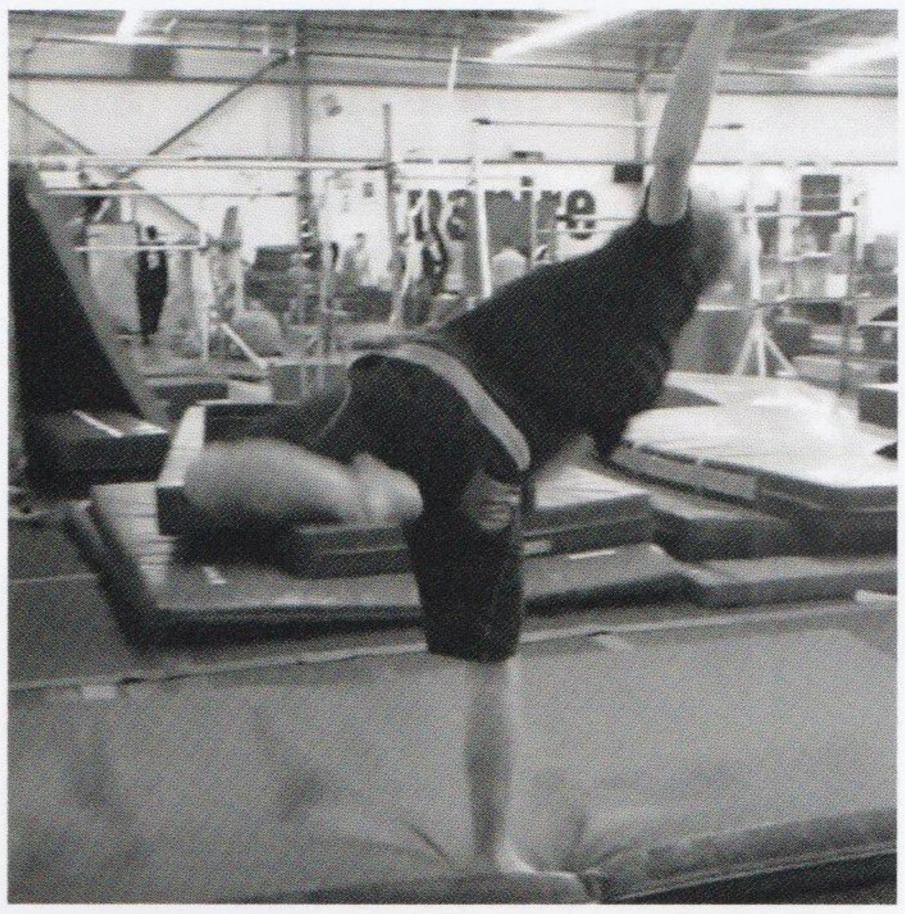
#MAKE LANDINGS GREAT AGAIN





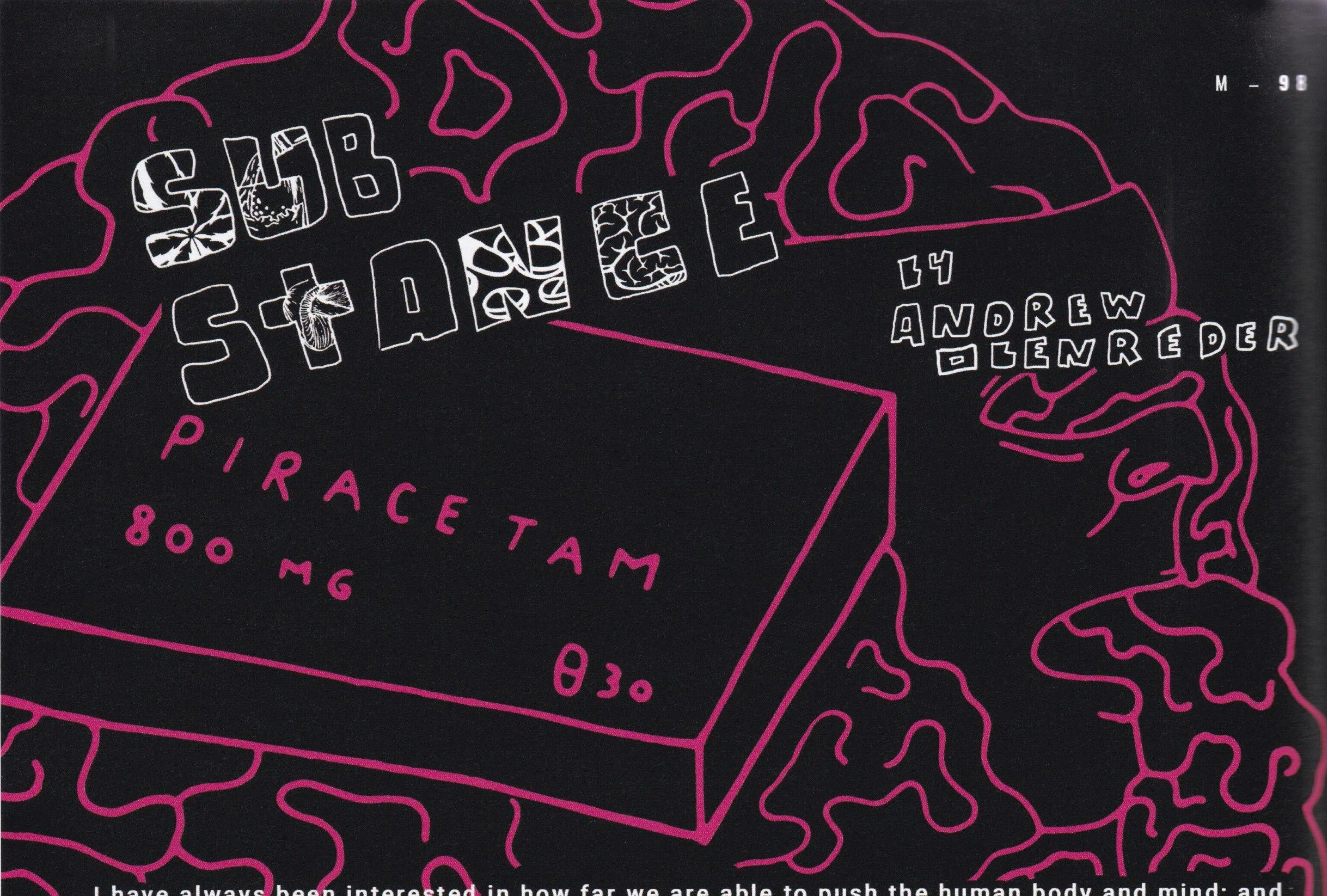
FUCK THAT
KNEE DESTROYING, EGO-FUELED
FUCKERY.

— A WISE MAN



SUB STANCE

by ANDREW OLENREDER



I have always been interested in how far we are able to push the human body and mind; and where and how these limitations can be pushed. Generally, I take a very naturalist route to this philosophy, using only the processes and methods found within the human capability (meditation, visualization, etc.) or substances found within nature that are more or less proven to be safe for our existence. However, after living with my friend Lucas Dimoveo, a fellow parkour practitioner and trans-humanist, I started becoming ever-increasingly intrigued by the idea of the idea of human progress through other means.

Generally, I stay away from pharmaceuticals, with the exception of a few that break the rule, like albuterol if I'm having an uncontrollable asthma attack or allergy medicine if I'm stuffed full of boogers and I'm playing music and need my voice. I mean, it's hard for even a doctor to convince me to take a damn aspirin. However, after researching for the past few years about nootropics, I decided to see what possible training related benefits could be associated with these substances.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with the term, Nootropics, generally referred to as smart drugs, are pharmaceuticals, supplements, nutraceuticals, and functional foods that improve mental functions such as memory, motivation or attention. Over the past few years, I have taken some natural nootropics such as Ginko Biloba and DMAE, noticing some positive benefits over time. Recently I have been experimenting with a Racetam (class of substances sharing a pyrrolidone nucleus) known as Piracetam, the first nootropic to be discovered back in 1964. Piracetam is structurally similar to gamma-Aminobutyric acid (GABA), the chief inhibitory neurotransmitter in our nervous systems that plays a principal role in reducing neuronal excitability throughout the system and regulates muscular tone, but unlike GABA, does not influence the same receptors. While piracetam's mechanism of action is not quite understood, the substance influences neuronal and vascular functions, as well as cognitive function, without acting as a stimulant or sedative. The theory is that it works by improving the permeability of cell membranes, providing enhanced delivery and dispersal of oxygen molecules to cells in the brain, seems to have a protective effect on those cells, and is also observed to result in an increase in circulation to neural tissues, creating better communication.

Piracetam and other nootropics have been used by competitive gamers for more immersive gameplay and within learning environments for enhanced learning capability for years now. With potential benefits such as supporting memory recall, information retention, and heightened focus, it's hard to turn and run from the possibilities. So instead, I decided to see how piracetam would stack up against my runs.

NOOTROPIC STACKS

Speaking of stacks, I was working with a pretty simple stack, or combination of nootropics, that included the brand of piracetam, Nootropil, and choline, a water-soluble vitamin-like essential nutrient that your body processes to produce acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter that is essential in memory and learning. Acetylcholine is why this couple makes a kickass team. Piracetam just so happens to enhance cognitive function by producing more acetylcholine and choline works synergistically with piracetam, heightening its performance.

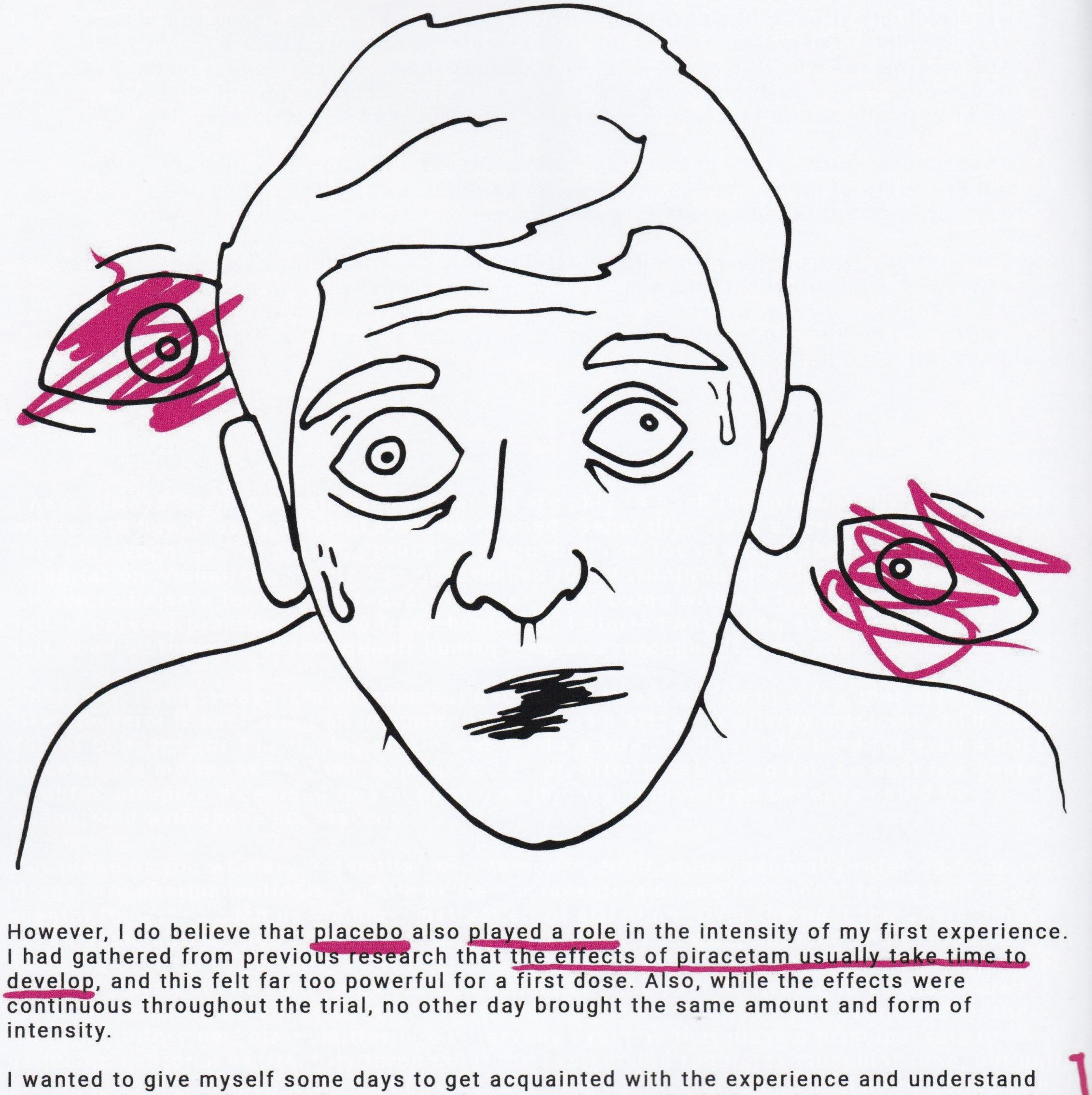
I had a one-month supply of piracetam and wanted to see how it would affect the full spectrum of my movement practice, so I trained with various intention for 30 days to see what potential benefits and drawbacks existed across the board.

The first day was the most intense, mostly to do with what felt like a placebo. I had an idea of what to expect and was consumed by nervousness and uncertainty of the unknown. I had my breakfast of chicken and spinach, which was my typical source of choline, followed by my dose of piracetam and an extremely uncomfortable metro ride.

DAY 1

INITIAL EFFECTS

There was a distinct and abrupt beginning to piracetam's effects. I became highly anxious, slightly paranoid, and began to have a slight headache while things around me became far more intense than usual. Sound engulfed me from all directions, every motion fought for my undying attention, and everything seemed highly vivid. I took some moments to ground myself with a few deep breaths and tried to remember this was happening because of something I had taken. I realized I was in this state of hyper-awareness where I seemed capable of focusing on every single happening around me without disruption.



SUBSTANCE WARMUP

However, I do believe that placebo also played a role in the intensity of my first experience. I had gathered from previous research that the effects of piracetam usually take time to develop, and this felt far too powerful for a first dose. Also, while the effects were continuous throughout the trial, no other day brought the same amount and form of intensity.

I wanted to give myself some days to get acquainted with the experience and understand piracetam's capabilities before attempting to push myself within training. The next few days consisted of lengthy warmups, conditioning, and light movement, simplistic things where I could be mindful during the process with little effort, specifically to understand how it affected the mind and body. There were a few things that stayed quite consistent.

PIRACETAM EFFECTS

When doing something repetitive, especially when fully immersed, it's easy for me to lose track of where I am and what I've completed. One of the first things I noticed was that this wasn't the case and I was very capable of managing focus between the physical actions and mental tracking.

When working on some drill, I was easily drawn and locked to a singular point of focus. Especially in a busy city like Ciudad de México, it's very easy to become distracted by the infinite sights and sounds within the surroundings, however, I was able to stay entirely immersed in each stage of my objective. The only downside to this was that my vision would occasionally glue itself to a particular thing and would shift last second causing hiccups in my movement or a slight moment of panic prior to engaging with the following obstacle.

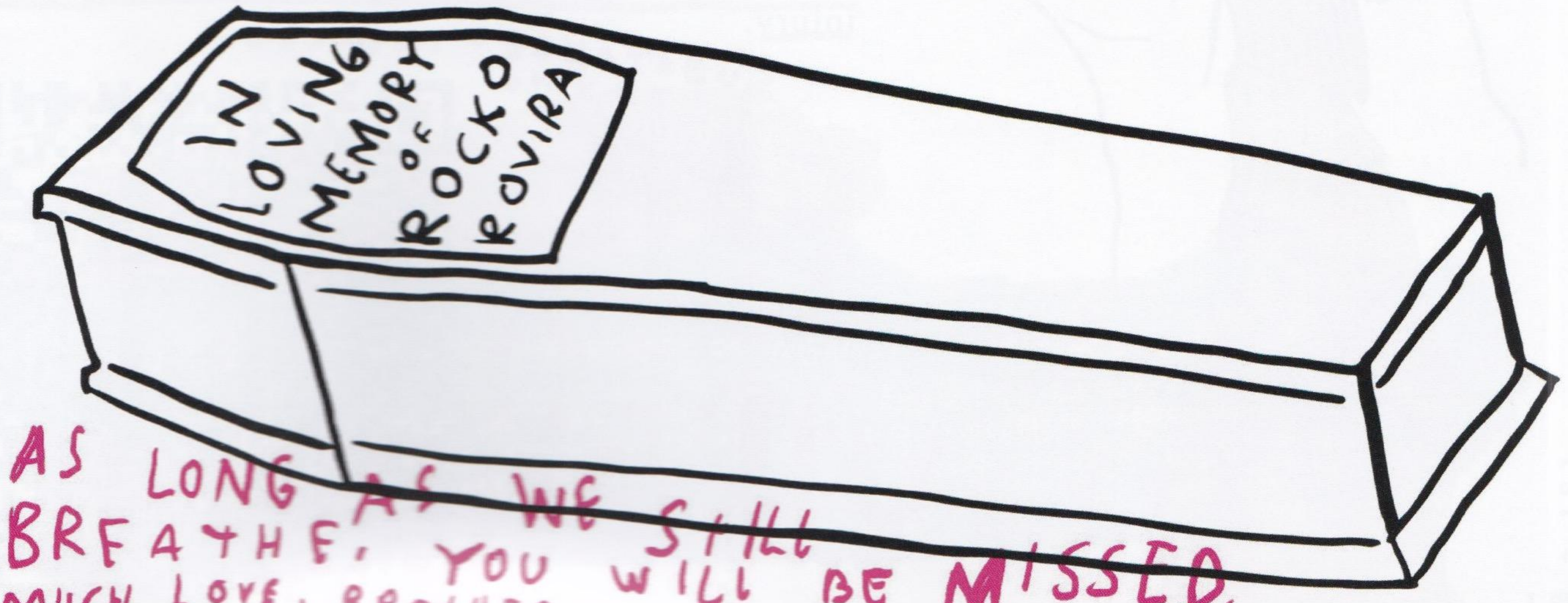
It's quite easy for me to become mentally fatigued even if not training at a high intensity, and there was near to no mental exhaustion during my sessions. This allowed me to move safely until I reached what I felt was my physical limitation.

TRAINING ON PIRACETAM VIDEO

DOUBLE DOSE DISASTER

Some days into the trial, I began noticing the effects becoming lighter, so I had decided to begin taking a double dose, as I planned to push my training much harder. However, upon arriving outside the metro that day, I received a call from my friend, Seb, which quickly changed the day's direction. Our good friend Rocko, who we had planned to train with that session, had died in the night and I was being called to attend the funeral, which just so happened to be right then. Let's just say that hyper-vivid focus is not something that makes a funeral for a friend any easier.

MY EMOTIONS SEEMED TO MAGNIFY AS I UNCONTROLLABLY CRIED FOR HOURS, UNABLE TO TURN MY ATTENTION AWAY FROM MY FRIEND.

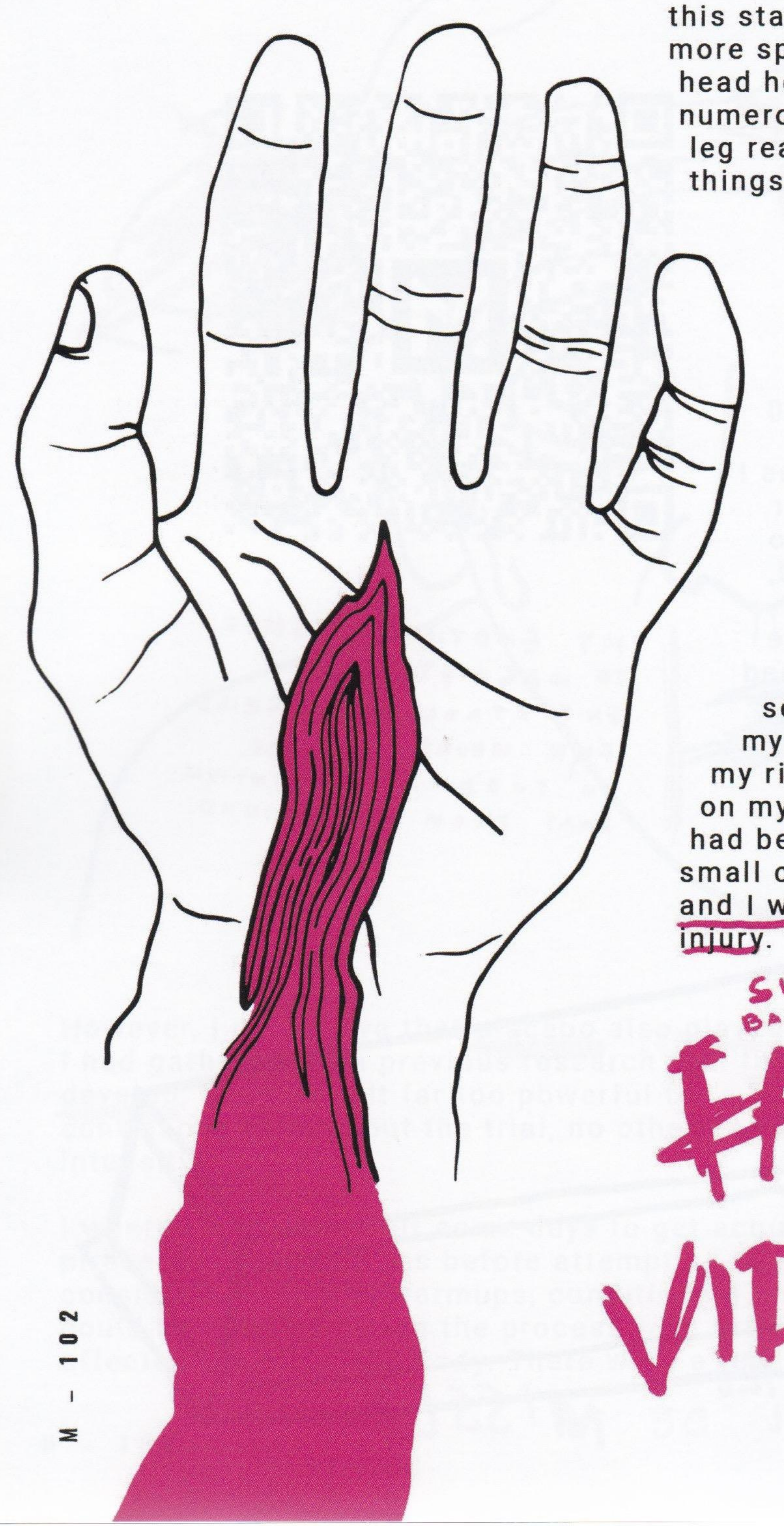

IN LOVING MEMORY OF ROCKO ROVIRA

AS LONG AS WE STILL BREATHE, YOU WILL BE MISSED.
MUCH LOVE, BROTHER.

During the week, I spent as much time with various training methods and intensities, and within different environments to understand how the substance would affect me throughout the broadest spectrum of practice. All of my previous findings had remained and continued to grow in intensity as the trial continued.

Dialing into a challenge became instantaneous and the flow state was easily achieved with little effort. I was capable of locking my focus to the first task and continuously spotting through every action thereafter. However, there was a noticeable difference between this and my usual flow state. Typically, the flow state for me is a hyper-focused motion blur of fulfillment and essentially feels like autopilot kicks in after the first step. Due to the constant state of heightened focus, there never seemed to be the autopilot sensation, but the hyper-focus and absolute sense of fulfillment remained.

PIRACETAM EFFECTS



Another interesting moment regarding heightened states of focus came when training this tac hurdle stride with Andy Haug. The challenge sat between this statue of a head, some space, a small ledge, more space, and then another ledge a little over head height. I had bounced the stride back numerous times, falling just a little short of my left leg reaching the top. Ever have a bail moment when things slow down Matrix-style and there seems to be enough time to think, "Well, fuck," and devise some last second plan? Well, that doesn't happen here. On my last attempt for the day, I watched as I misplaced my foot on the takeoff, and with too little power, connected with the wall. My foot slips forward as I catch the wall with my gastrocnemius and left hand. I look to my left hand as I am falling, watching it tear open as it pulls away from the wall. My right foot connects with the ground, I see the wall behind me, and I release myself from the wall as I am nearly in a full-split, pelvis hugging the concrete in front of me. I lean forward, tuck my chin in so that my head doesn't make contact, reach my right hand to the ground and connect it and my right leg for a break fall as I exit with a smile on my face. I checked my hand again, thinking it had been ripped open, only to find nothing but a small cut. All of this occurred perfectly in real-time, and I was able to avoid some potentially serious injury.

PIRACETAM EFFECTS SAVED MY BALLS

SUBSTANCE - INDUCED BALL SAVING ~~FAIL~~ VIDEO

PIRACETAM EFFECTS CONT.

Within the context of learning, movement dissection had also become significantly more digestible. I would watch a movement once or twice and be able to fully understand its mechanics. This also applied within the educational environment when teaching and breaking down the movements of others.

As the days progressed, so did my mental-physical fortitude. I took a double dose before going to this "2016 training" session where the goal was to complete 2,016 repetitions of various exercises and challenges. When I felt I should have been tired, I wasn't. Not a single inch of my body suffered from soreness or fatigue. At some point during the training, my friend Lucia approached, asking why I hadn't slowed down or taken a break and had hardly broken a sweat. The only honest answer, "Drugs."

ON TOP

EPISODE 01

THE LEAGUE OF LEGENDS HASHES OUT SUBSTANCES

LISTEN TO THE PODCAST EXCLUSIVELY ON MUVMAG.COM

PIRACETAM FINDINGS + CONCLUSIONS

Overall, piracetam provided many positive benefits related to focus, learning, retention, and mental fortitude. During my trial with piracetam, I experienced very few of the potential negative side-effects, which included headaches and anxiety. Most of the negative effects I had experienced were confined within the first day and only experienced one headache aside from that.

I'm certain this will not be my final encounter with piracetam. It is an interesting substance: one with seemingly very few negatives and a handful of rewards. I think next time though, like those college students cramming for exams, I too will try my hand at some enhanced learning. Mi español aún necesita mucho amor. Or maybe it'll be for better jumping again.

DUH.

DISCLAIMER:

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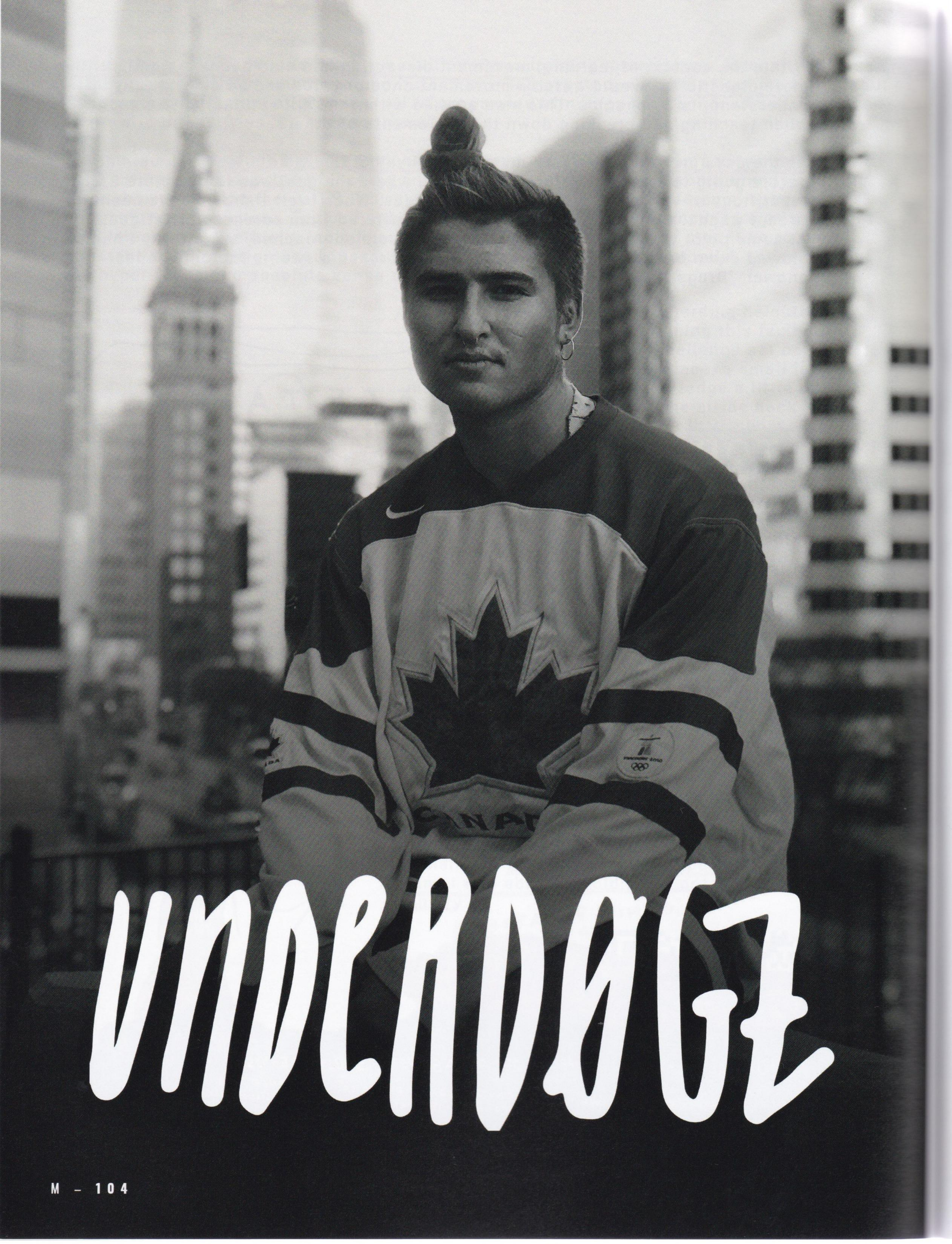
WE DO HOPE THAT WE CAN PROVIDE BOTH EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE AND EXPERIENCE - BASED INFORMATION TO HELP YOU MAKE AN EDUCATED DECISION FOR YOURSELF AND TO SPARK DISCUSSION.



UNDERDOGZ

ETHAN KLICKSTEIN

INTERVIEW

BEAR SCHNEIDER

Who are you, how old are you, where are you from, and how long have you been training?

I'm Ethan Klickstein, I recently turned 19, I'm from Boston Massachusetts but I now live in Colorado Springs for school, and I've been training for nine years.

So what are you going to school for?

It's still unclear, I'm mainly just out here because it's an easy way to get somewhere new, somewhere fresh. A new community also, I just wanted to explore a little more. It's the same thing with school, I'm just trying to explore a bunch of stuff and figure out what I'm trying to do in life.

What's your favorite part of living Colorado? I mean, other than it just being beautiful 24/7.

I would say my parkour habits getting shaken up a little bit because I've lived in the same place back in Boston my entire life. I love the parkour community there to death, they're all great friends of mine, but it's really nice to get closer with people in the Colorado Springs, Denver and Boulder parkour communities. Not only that, but I'm glad to be training at new spots because I've kinda trained at the same spots since I started training. I still love those spots, it's just nice to get all the training in at the new spots. It's definitely changed my style since I've been here. It has also been really fun to make all of these new friends and have their training styles kind of influence mine a bit.

WATCH ETHAN KLICKSTEIN IN ACTION.

UNDERDOGS VIDEO PRODUCED BY ALEX PAWLUS.

What got you into parkour?

Similar to, I'd say, a lot of people, I started by seeing some internet videos. I forget how old I was, I guess it was nine years ago, so I was ten. I saw some videos of Damien Walters and David Belle, and I just fell in love with it instantly. I was like "This is what I want to do." So my friend and I went out to his trampoline and tried learning front flips or you know, whatever, we started slow then maybe after about a year of going open gyms and stuff I got really invested in it quickly. Since then I've been going nonstop.

So I snooped a little bit on your social media, somebody tagged you and said that you inspired them because you train every day. Do you actually train every day?

I do, for the last two and a half years I've been training every day. Training can be kind of a loose definition, I at the very least, do one flip every day, but I do really strive to get a full training session in almost every day.

Damn dude, how do you manage to do that without exploding?

It's honestly not too hard. It sounds really daunting, and sure, there are some days when I'm a little extra sore or sick, or just busy with other things going on. But it's not too difficult to put aside, I dunno, 20 to 30 minutes to just go warm up a bit and work on one thing, kind of engage my body and see what I'm capable of. I'd say, especially these days, I don't really get that sore that often because my body's kind of gotten used to this. I really have to go ham for a full day to even be feeling it the next day, so I'm usually good to go.

When I talk to a lot of people about doing daily training, they just have this idea that you'll hate training if you're forcing yourself to do it every day, and that definitely has not been my experience. If anything, I've grown to love this sport even more through doing it every day. One of the things I love most about parkour is how it can help me escape whatever is going on in my day to day life, and so taking a daily break from everything else to go train has been so beneficial for my mental health. I'm physically a lot stronger, and my body is in generally better shape from training every day.

From a creativity standpoint, I think pushing myself in that way has been really really helpful. Some days it's just a backflip, but most of the time I'm trying to do something new. Training daily has definitely helped me find new challenges. You may not always be able to set aside three to four hours to train, but if you can squeeze in half an hour more often than you usually train, that's a great thing. You progress a lot faster. Just the sheer amount of time I've spent practicing at this point, I think it helps me get everything more refined and get new tricks quicker.

I definitely progress a lot quicker than before I trained daily. That feeling you get at the end of a week knowing that you trained hard every day, I just feel great at the end of that.

Being here with Andrew in Mexico has probably been the most time I've put into training in a week, I don't want to say in my career, but like in my entire parkour lifetime.

Yeah, that was Jump Fest for me.

Ooh, tell me about Jump Fest.

There's just such a strong sense of community. It's just having that many people in one place living together and training every day, it's just such a...I don't even know. There are just so many good vibes coming from all directions, and everyone's progressing and working on things together. All the discussions, especially, where every night I was talking to people for hours about all sorts of different stuff. I really enjoyed seeing the community more visibly and meeting more people. This was my first year going, and I'm definitely coming back next year.

I really enjoyed the one year that I went. I felt like I came back a different person...You'll be seeing me there next year for sure. On that note, have you ever traveled abroad for parkour?

I have, I went to England two summers ago. I went to Copenhagen the same trip, but that's about it for parkour. Most of my parkour travels have been in the US...I would just say for anybody who is trying to make a trip anytime soon, Copenhagen is one of the coolest cities I've ever been to, the whole city is just amazing parkour spots. The mentality of the people there towards parkour is just so much more accepting. Even their playgrounds are essentially just parkour parks, if I had to recommend somewhere to go, it would say go to Copenhagen.

That's what I've heard about Copenhagen as well. I've heard so many good things and seen so many cool videos. Is there anybody you really connected with while you were there?

I got to train with a bunch of the local guys, but Carl Hertz is the funniest and weirdest dude I've ever met, and he's an absolute god at bars. He's very casual about how good he is at everything.

When I watch videos of the guys overseas and the places they train bars, I'm just completely amazed.

Yeah, I love watching people that are good at bars, that might be one of my favorite types of movement to watch. People like Jared Nahulu.

Who or what are your biggest inspirations for training or just life in general? What motivates you?

There's a lot of different motivating forces in my life, but when it comes to training, I would say my training friends inspire me the most. I feel like I'm enjoying my movement the most and doing things I'm most proud of when I'm training with these people. Just watching our own styles and ideas mix, Ezra Gudeon, Josh Malone, Zack Karro, Gabe Le Neveu, and so many more I can't even count. Watching their movement and training with them is what inspires me the most. In terms of people I look up to, I'm like a fanboy for so many people, I love everything that the Tryhard Collective does, Matt Meyer, he's amazing, I'm really inspired by his movement. I'd also say I'm inspired by just the possibilities of movement in general. This sport has so much that you can do with it. I love just sitting there and brainstorming, thinking about how much there is to try. I have a list of tricks on my phone, so when I'm bored I'll think of something new and put it there so when I'm at the gym I'll try all this stuff.

What's your signature move? If I chose Ethan Klickstein in Smash, what would his final smash be?

Flyaway or front handspring. Those are probably the two tricks I do most often. They're overlooked because people think they aren't as versatile as other tricks. I have this joke with my friends, it's "If you can hang on something, you can flyaway off of it." Front handspring is really underrated in my mind because I think that a lot of people look at is as a transition move or a basic, and you can do a lot with it if you just get a little creative. I'd say in the last month or two I've been doing a lot more front handsprings.

What are your favorite moves to combo right now?

Lately, I've been really into trying to swing a cork or a gainer out of tricks that you usually don't do swings out of, recently I did flyaway swing through gaet.

Bruh what.

(laughs) That's the stuff I'm really interested in. It's so fun to try these things, especially because I'm so bad at swings, honestly. Tricking is one of my weaknesses, but I've been trying to trick more often with the specific goal of being able to do swings out of more freerunning moves.

What is your athletic background? Have you played any other sports either before or during your parkour career?

When I was a little kid, I played soccer a bit but was not a fan...at all. Parkour definitely fits who I am very well, I'm not really that interested in any other sports. I've been skateboarding a little bit more, recently. I think skating is really really cool and I would love to get a bit better at that.

What is your best or worst injury story?

I have been really lucky with injuries, I've never had anything that bad, knock on wood. I have had some funny bails, just nothing that damaging. I actually made a bail video earlier this year.

Over this last year and a half, I've been saving all these clips. I'd say none of them are stand out in general, but I fail a lot.

Word, that's good to hear. What are your favorite clothing brands both inside and outside of parkour?

A lot of my clothes I just get from thrift shops, I'm one of those kids. But I like to make a lot of my own clothing, I like to sew and screenprint, that type of stuff.

So I should be looking for the Klickstein collection soon?

Give me some time, I'll have my gear to challenge Farang. Just give me a year.

Oh shit, hit me up when it comes out, I'll preorder.

Will do, will do. But I would say when it comes to parkour clothing brands, I am a huge fan of everything Myrm has put out and I want them to make more.

Yup. Bless them boys. My shorts have recently disappeared, and my heart is broken.

Nooo! I wear those shorts so often. That's very tragic, and those are hard to come by these days.

I know. Should've bought another pair when they did that final run of them. Shoulda, coulda, woulda. Anyways, What does your diet look like? Do you have anything specific that you eat or are you just one of those that can eat whatever the hell you want?

So, I wish that I had a better diet. It's something I hear a lot of people talk about, and I know if I gave it effort I could probably eat a lot better and I would really feel it in my training...But to be completely honest, I treat my body like shit (laughs). I eat irregularly. I'm a pescatarian, I think that's the only legitimate thing of note. Other than that I'm mostly eating junk food and massive amounts of fruit.

That's not terrible, it could be worse. Do you have a go-to food for before or after training?

(laughs) Yeah, when I go out for a long training day, I stock up of peppermint Luna bars and Arizona ice tea. Those are the snacks. You can ask pretty much anybody that's ever trained with me, I'm almost always carrying around a gallon of Arizona.

I've done that a few times.

It's nice, it's nice. I mean, water is also nice.

I find myself leaning more towards water now, but back in the day you could definitely catch me every so often with the gallon and killing it within the first hour. That's the good shit man.

Ooh here's a good one. What's your muggle alter-ego? What do you do outside of freerunning and parkour?

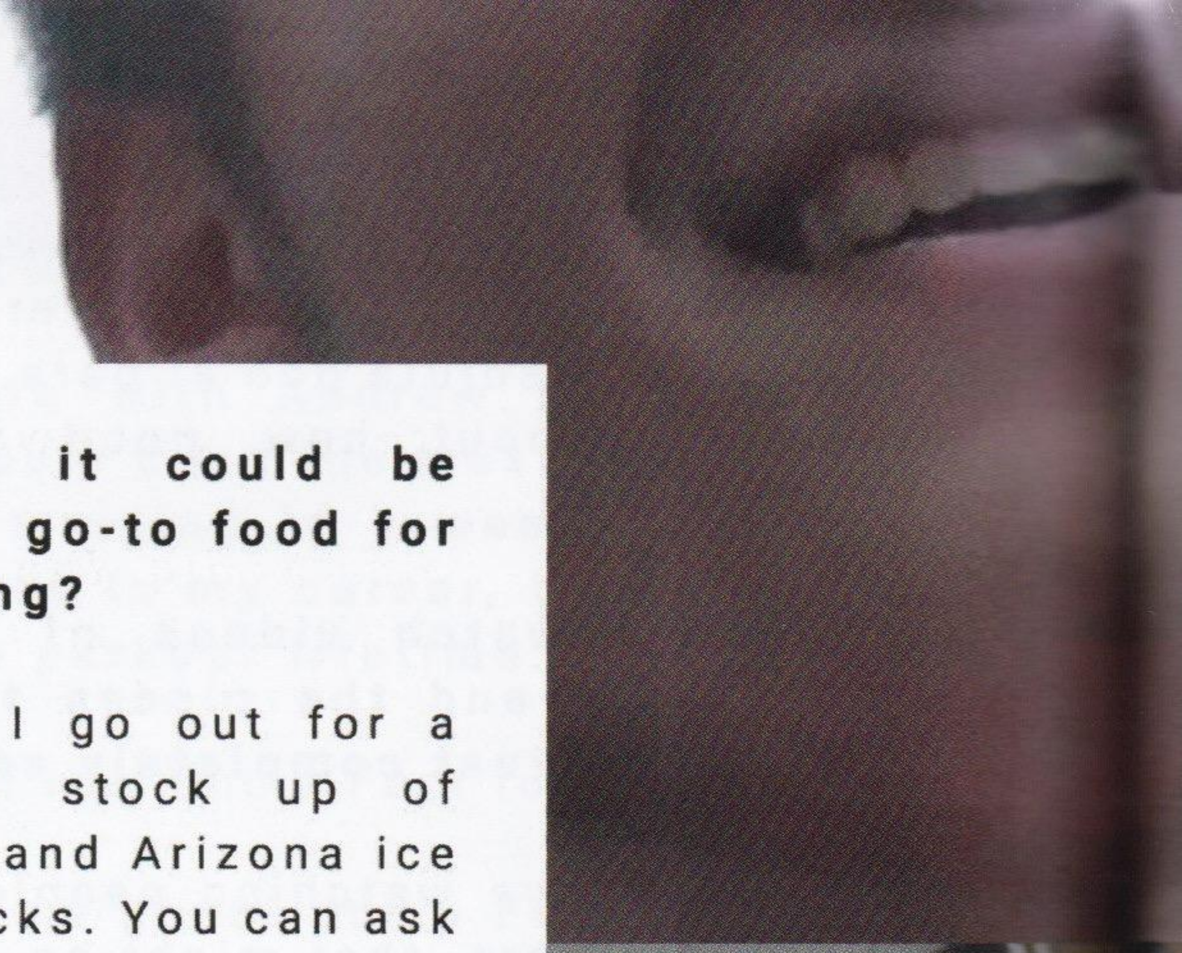
I really love to do photography, like darkroom photography. It's my biggest passion outside of parkour, so I spend a lot of time doing that. I have a bunch of close friends I've met through parkour that I like to spend time with, muggle it up, play some Smash Bros and whatnot.

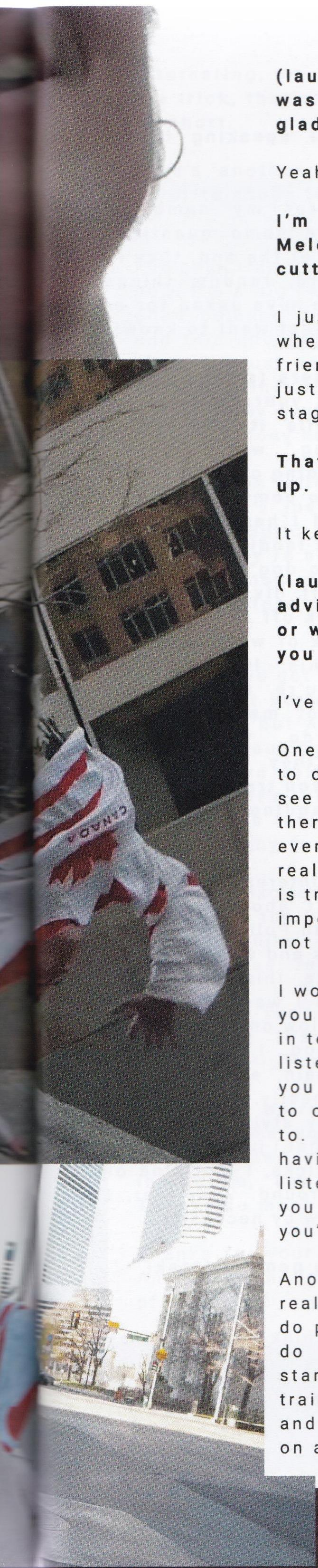
Alright, so this is probably going to be the most divisive question.

Oh boy.

This has two parts: Who is your main in Melee and who is your main in the new Smash?

I'm gonna embarrass myself here, (laughs) because in both games I'm a Kirby guy. I know there's a lot of flak given to people who main as Kirbys. It's warranted. But, I always tell people you can main Kirby without being an asshole. You don't have to spam down-B. You don't have to be that guy. You can be a different kind of Kirby.





(laughs) That was excellent. That was a really important question. I'm glad we got to that.

Yeah, I was sweating over that one.

I'm a big fan of Captain Falcon in Melee. I might just be a cookie cutter jerk though.

I just have too many memories from when I first started Smash of all of my friends who were way better than me just Falcon Punching me off of the stage for hours.

That's amazing, sorry to bring that up.

It keeps me up at night.

(laughs) Next, what is a piece of advice you wish you had listened to or wish somebody had told you when you started parkour?

I've got a couple answers to that.

One, I would say, is that you don't have to do what everyone else is doing. I see especially in younger kids in gyms there's a big push to be trying what everyone else is doing. Obviously, it's really fun to see what everybody else is trying and try it yourself. I think it's important to find your own style and not just do scoot dubs everywhere.

I would also say I wish I had been told you can do everything in your own way in terms of technique. But, you should listen to people when they are giving you helpful input, and you don't have to change anything if you don't want to. I think there's a balance between having your own technique and listening when other people are telling you what you can change about what you're doing.

Another piece of advice; you can be really close friends with people that do parkour, but you don't just have to do parkour all the time. When I started, I would meet people just to train, then it'd be like "Alright, see ya," and I definitely feel like I missed out on a lot for a long time. You can meet up with someone and just hang out all day and not even train, 'cuz I would definitely say I've met a lot of my closest friends through parkour. There are just so many great people in this community, so don't be afraid to put aside training time for a minute to get closer to people.

Nice, that's something we talked about recently, actually. Andrew was talking about how people here in Mexico, even when you speak to them in Spanish, there's a barrier when you try to talk to them about life things because all they want to do is talk about parkour.

Yeah, that's the thing, it's like I can talk about parkour all day, but I just like getting to know people because parkour is such a great vessel for meeting people from all sorts of places.

Yes, I agree. I think that's what it's all about, honestly. You can be shitty at movement and know everybody and still have so much fulfillment from parkour.

Where do you see yourself in ten years?

Oh man, um, honestly I'd say probably living in a van Max Henry style, at least that's where I wanna be in ten years. And I wanna still be training every day.

I'm about that, I was feeling that for such a long time. I was like, dude, I just want to live in a van and travel all over. I actually just got a Prius recently, which I decked the fuck out. You can leave the car on all night and it stays the same temperature and uses barely any gas, and you can sleep in it because it has so much cargo space. I think the Prius is the van of the future.

Maybe that's where I'll be in ten years, I'll be in the Prius.

(laughs) I'll be right there with you buddy!

(laughs) I just wanna go everywhere. That's the coolest thing about the sport, there are people everywhere who will take you in. It's so nice with such a small community how people will just do that.

I think about that all the time, it's so cool that there are so few, yet so many people that do parkour, that you can kinda just go anywhere and people will just inherently trust you and be cool with you because you do the same sport. Even if you have nothing in common.

All the Sandy Banana guys did that when they went to Puerto Rico, they just stayed with some random dude they'd never met before, and his mom was just making them home cooked meals and they were training together every day.

Dude that's so amazing.

I feel like often I get trapped in a headspace like "Oh my god, parkour is so great, this community is so amazing and nobody else gets to experience things like this," but I kind of stop myself and I'm like yeah parkour's great, but it's not that special. I mean not that it isn't special, but there are a lot of other amazing sports and communities, but there are certain things, like the hospitality, that make parkour truly unique. It is kind of different than other sports in that way.

I feel that. We're just so small in comparison to almost anything else that's popular right now, it's just so easy to go anywhere and find somebody that you connect with and share experiences that you've both experienced independently, but they're also the same experience. Kind of like we're doing right now.

A lot of my closest friends are people I've met from parkour that live thousands of miles away from me. Growing up, I was always so grateful for those relationships, to have people that I can turn to when I was fed up with people at home.

Yeah man, you're speaking to my heart right now.

Well, that's it for my numbered questions. I have some questions kind of tacked on at the end, they're just kind of weird, random things that either people have asked for or that I personally just want to know.

One of my coworkers (shouts out to Alec) talks about your landings all the time. He calls it the "Ethan Klickstein Landing," which is just like hands up, landing crazy low, and still being able to combo out of all of it. Andrew and I have also been talking about this landing, I think it was your "Feed yo dog" post, where you start off cliff diving but then you do a cast back off of something that's like a plank of wood tall, you just land in this insanely low position and you're totally fine. That's just one of many that I've noticed, how do your knees function? Do they ever hurt randomly, and do you train to be able to combo out of landings like that?

See, this is really interesting because I've never thought about this until recently when Dylan Polin commented on one of my posts and was like "Only you can land like this." I started looking for it and I was like wow, I really do dip hella low on my landings. My knees are good, I have strong knees. No knee pain, even with the daily training. Honestly, I don't know what developed my style like that, I think part of it is that I just don't jump high on a lot of tricks, I just kind of stay low to the ground. With that, I think I just land low by necessity.

Cool, you're just a genetic freak!

Well thank you! I think part of it was that when I was training for the first couple years, I was just really short and pretty damn weak so I couldn't put a lot of power into anything. I kind of adapted to being able to land things that I normally shouldn't be able to by waiting until the last possible second.

Interesting, so being short. That's the trick, that's why I suck. I have to be short.

Here's another one, what are your favorite shoes for training?

I've been training in Strikes for a while now. I'm a big fan, I think they have a good balance of being thick enough and thin enough and have great grip, but I did just destroy my last pair of them and they're kinda expensive so I'm probably gonna try those new Vans that everybody has been wearing.

Andrew was telling me that the Ultra Range Pro's just came out. They're the same build as the original ones, except they're not made of mesh and don't rip instantaneously. They are a little bit less than Strikes, maybe about $90.

Alright, I've got one last one for you. We haven't been able to watch your video yet, but Alex Pawlus has been talking about how your video is the most beans thing he's ever filmed, and that it's like the wildest shit. How do you feel about the video? Do you have any favorite lines?

I'm really excited to see the full thing, it's one of the best training days I've had in awhile. There were a couple lines I was really happy with. In particular, I did this gainer pre straight to kong pre that I was really happy with. It's on my @flipeveryday Instagram right now, actually.

Excellent, we're gonna go check it out now. So you don't have to sit here while we gawk at your Instagram, I'm gonna let you go. Thanks so much for your time.

Thanks for your time man, and thank Andrew for me for asking me to be part of this!

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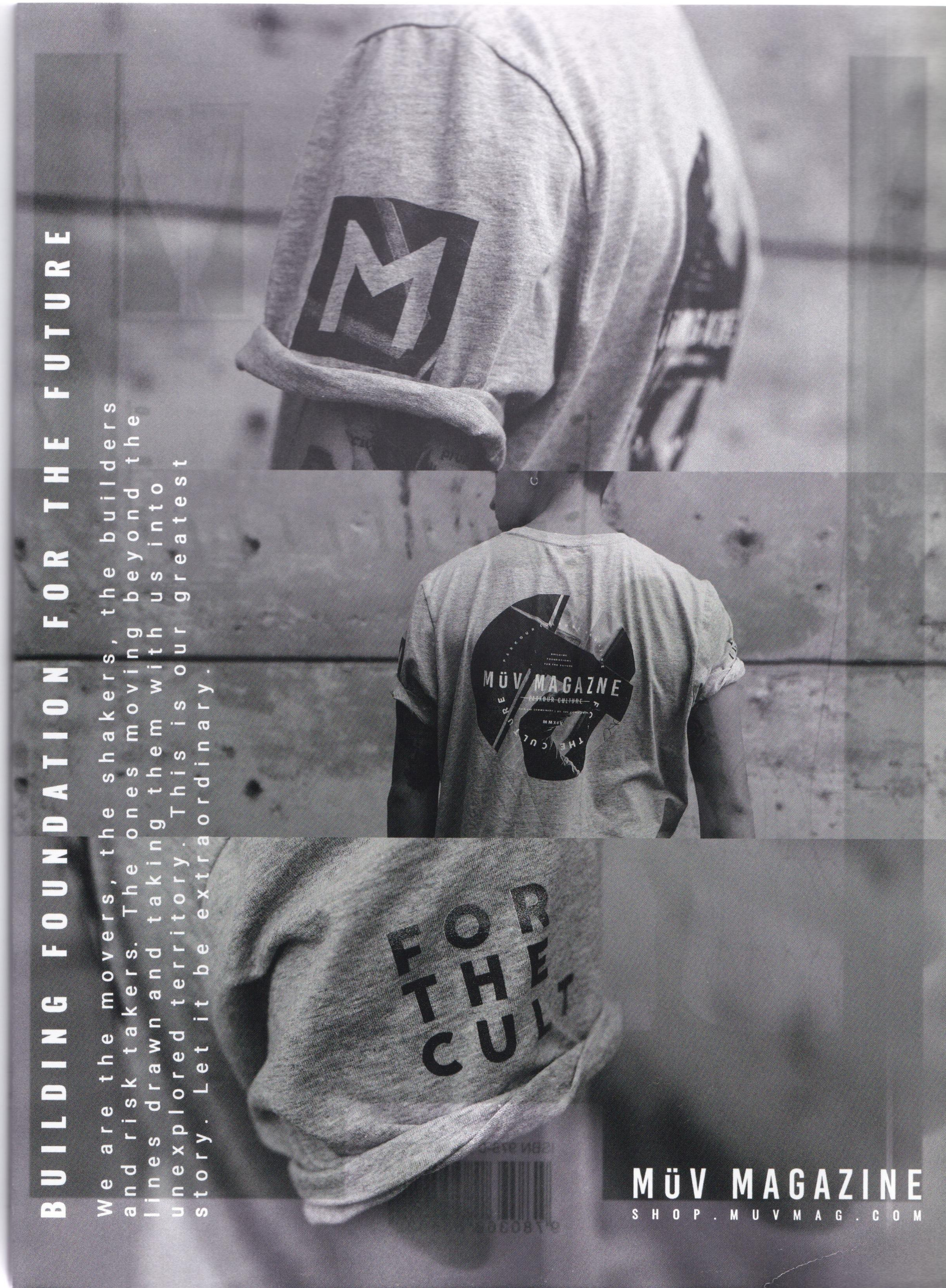
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signed by: Trystan Puckhaber
CEO and Board Representative
10/17/2025